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THE

SECOND EMPIRE

AS EXHIBITED IN

FRENCH LITERATURE
1852—1863

37834

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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THE SECOND EMPIRE

CHAPTER I.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE SECOND EMPIRE.

T the time when Gillray was publishing his amusing ricatures; when Napoleon was regarded in the light an ogre, pre-eminently useful for frightening small ildren; when the man who dared to express a doubt hether one Englishman was equal any day to three enchmen, was looked upon as an idiot; in the days, short, when rotten boroughs and Catholic oppression re considered the two bulwarks of the throne—what uld have been the awful fate of the rash prophet ring to predict that, in the year 1855, the Gillray the day would be drawing pictures of an Englishman d a Frenchman grasping the right hand of fellowship, d the nation would receive them with hearty applause? e can imagine the shouts of unextinguished laughter r respected forefathers would have raised at such an a, as they sat over their port, and thrashed the ench in their minds. But port has gone out of hion, and with it a great deal of the prejudice which lieved that men who drank claret were utter milksops;

while the daring acts of the French army in the Crime have extinguished the last lingering doubt that stamin and pluck are only producible by beef and beer.

There was a time, however, and not so long back when the old prejudices were in a fair way of bein roused, and the approximation produced by the Gre Exhibition removed to the days of Henry V. and Agi court by the *coup d'état* of the 2nd Decembe Englishmen are so fond of fitting their constitutionalis to European nations, and fancying that the garmen will not require the slightest alteration, that the cannot endure the notion of any one trying to take in, or render it in accordance with the present fashio But the Prince-President went on his way calmly an serenely, caring little for the attacks made upon hi while he kept one object steadily in view: and th almost universal recognition granted to his exertions a sufficient proof of the wisdom of his enlighten policy. France remained tranquil under the only for of government which can keep her turbulent spirits order, and the time arrived when the motives of th Imperial policy should be made known, not as apology for the past but as a sure omen for the futu But it was a very dangerous task for any Frenchm to assume: the history of the Empire is so indissolul connected with the great names which have so recen fretted their brief hour on the political stage, that a impartial author must anticipate a hornet's nest buzzi about his ears. One man in France has had t courage to undertake the ungrateful task, and no o

can deny his competency. M. Granier de Cassagnac* is known as one of the most uncompromising friends of order, at a period when it was a very difficult task to decide whether the Prince-President or the "Sword of France" would be accommodated with apartments at Vincennes. During the struggles of the turbulent Assembly to remove the President, M. Cassagnac shunned no peril in showing the nation in whom they had to trust; and Dr. Véron, with a courage for which we had not given him credit, opened the columns of the *Constitutionnel* to the defender of the Prince, in the face of certain fine and possible imprisonment. M. Cassagnac set about his difficult labours of justifying the Empire in the face of Europe in a most tolerant spirit, and while drawing attention to the faults which entailed the overthrow of the "Napoleon of Peace," he has not thought his cause could be strengthened by that violent abuse which so many French writers are apt to heap on the fallen.

After seventeen years of ardent turmoil followed by a profound calm, the Government of Louis Philippe appeared to contain all the guarantees of solidity, and few suspected that a body of factious men were about to hurl their country once more into the caldron of revolution. It is true that outbreaks had shown the existence of a strong democratic power among the nation; but these had been put down with such ease that the king felt no apprehension as to their conquering

* Histoire de la Chute du Roi Louis Philippe, de la République de 1848 et du Rétablissement de l'Empire. Paris: Henri Plon.

his government. The Revolution of 1830 gave birth to the new system of secret societies, which disturbed the country at intervals; the most important and dangerous being that of Amis du Peuple, which was defeated by Marshal Lobau on the 5th of June, 1832. This was followed by the society of the Droits de l'Homme, which broke out in Lyons on the 9th, in Paris on the 13th of April, 1834. This society gave its last dying gasp in the attempted assassination of the king in 1835. These decided blows intimidated the leaders, and only two incorrigible agitators remained on the field, Barbès and Blanqui, who founded, in 1835, the Société des Familles. This is the only society, our author remarks, which had not time for bloodshed, as it was dispersed the next year, while Martyn Bernard created in its stead the Société des Saisons, also broken up in the sanguinary conflict of the 12th May, 1839. After the death of the Duc d'Orleans in 1842, the conspirators again recovered, but the clubs never regained their pristine popularity; for it has been proved that the total of the revolutionary party at the end of 1847 only amounted to fifteen hundred men, disorganized and unarmed. The chiefs of this party were quite unprepared for action. Even three days before the catastrophe the conspirators had formed no plans. Albert himself confessed that no measures had been taken. In fact, the revolutionary party had never been so powerless, and the police, though acquainted with their meeting places, took no trouble to disperse them. How, then did the Revolution take place?

The Government in 1847 had been greatly strengthened by the recent elections; the Spanish marriage had gained Louis Philippe considerable credit everywhere but in England; and the Ministry was strong both at home and abroad. The Opposition was thoroughly defeated, and of course began plotting instead of accepting the situation. In this they were greatly assisted by M. Duvergier de Hauranne, who hit on the idea of agitating the country by tumultuous banquets, and by arousing the passions of the populace, forcing the king to dismiss a Ministry which was supported by a powerful majority. He gained over Odillon Barrot to his views, and coalecsed with the revolutionists, as represented by the *National*. The agitation once resolved on, the first banquet took place at the Château Rouge, at which M. Ledru Rollin refused to be present, as he feared to compromise his principles. Eventually, however, the position of the Republicans was defined, and M. Rollin was enabled at Lille to announce "the overflow of the Nile, which would clear away all impurities and leave on the banks the germ of fecundity and new life." The French Chambers reopened on the 28th of December, 1847, and the king threw down the gauntlet in his speech from the throne. He appealed to the good sense of the country against "the agitation raised by hostile passions or blind excitement." The Opposition was beaten on the amendment, and, at a meeting held at Odillon Barrot's, it was decided that the Paris banquet should take place on the 22nd of February, the *National* remarking ominously, "The

contest of words must pass into action." The Government, confiding in its majority, decided on trying the question of the banquets in a court of law, and the Opposition withdrew on the 20th of February the proposed banquet. But the Republican party was not disposed to let the opportunity slip, and M. Marrast, as representative of the *Réforme* paper, published a manifesto on the 21st, ignoring entirely the movements of the Opposition. Odillon Barrot gave way to the arguments of the Republicans, and the meeting was finally to take place, Ledru Rollin and Louis Blanc warning the people through the *Réforme* against any rash excitement.

Guizot and Duchâtel had taken the requisite measures against insurrection. Paris contained twenty-five thousand soldiers, and the adjacent garrisons could double the number. Paris would have been occupied at an early hour of the 22nd, but the withdrawing of the dynastic deputies late on the night of the 21st induced the king to believe in the continuance of tranquillity. The troops were countermanded, and the day passed over quietly. The secret society of the Saisons had received orders to hold themselves in reserve, but the demonstration was restricted to stones thrown at the police and an attack on a gunsmith's shop. In the opinion of the professional conspirators, the 22nd of February was a barren day. "It is not at all clear," said M. Caussidière, at nightfall; "there is certainly a mob, but that is all: they will not even get to firing." A meeting was held at nine in the evening under the

colonnade of the Palais Royal, and it was seen that there was nothing republican in the movement. The Government prepared for the next day, and committed its gravest fault by calling out the Garde Nationale The bourgeois of Paris, who are always Frondeurs, determined to profit by this summons to exert an irresistible pressure on the king. They drew up a petition condemnatory of the Ministry, and stated that they were going to prevent the effusion of blood. The conspirators took advantage of this, and M. Flocon hastily went to the office of the *Réforme* to order every republican to put on the national uniform and go about at the head of the detachments, shouting *Vive la Réforme!* The Republic might be attainable in that way. During the 23rd the secret societies made their appearance, and gave an aggressive character to the outbreak. The Quartiers St. Martin and du Temple were soon covered with barricades, and the mob searched the houses for the firelocks of the National Guard. During this time a strange scene was going on at the Tuileries. The queen strongly urged the retirement of M. Guizot as the only way of satisfying the people, saying, "If M. Guizot has the least sentiment of devotion for the king and for France, he will not remain a moment longer in power. He is destroying the king." The Duc de Montpensier suggested that laws for parliamentary and electoral reform should be laid before the Chambers at once, but this M. Duchâtel firmly declined.

"The king without concealing the perils of the situation, urged the repugnance he felt at the idea of

separating from his Minister. He added, 'I would sooner abdicate.' 'You must not say that,' the queen replied: 'you belong to France, not to yourself.' 'It is true,' the king replied. 'I am more unhappy than my Ministers! I cannot hand in my resignation.' Then, turning to M. Guizot, 'Do you believe, my dear President, that the Cabinet is in a position to hold its ground against the difficulties, and triumph over them?' 'Sire,' Guizot replied, 'when the king asks such a question, he resolves it. The Cabinet might conquer in the streets, but it cannot at the same time conquer the royal family and the crown. Any doubt about its strength at the Tuileries destroys its exercise of power. The Cabinet can only resign.' . . . . . The separation then took place and was very touching. The king embraced his ministers, and shed tears, 'You will always be the king's friend?' said the queen; 'you will support him?' Luois Philippe shook hands with MM. Duchâtel and Guizot once more at the door. 'How happy you are! You leave me with honour; I remain with disgrace.'"

The short-sighted bourgeoisie delighted in the news of the ministerial resignation, not seeing in it the overthrow of Constitutionalism. The Garde Nationale returned home and illuminated their houses, leaving the capital a prey to the galley-slaves, thieves, &c., who, as they had not turned out on account of M. Guizot, did not think proper to retire for his successor, Molé. The streets were crowded with the scum of the nation, the same men to whom Barbès promised a milliard on the 15th

of May and Cavaignac dug a sepulchre for on the 24th of May. The retirement of the Garde Nationale threw the *National* and *Réforme* party into great embarrassment. They did not dare to attack the Government openly, and hence sought some covert way to irritate and raise the people of Paris. The revolutionary traditions offered them a precedent. On the 17th of July, 1791, Bailly and Lafayette were ordered by the Constituent Assembly to disperse the factious assembled round the altar of the country. The insurgents rushed upon the troops, one of them firing a pistol-shot, to which the troops responded by a general fire. In 1848 the Jacobins devised precisely the same plan.

"About ten in the evening a band of some three hundred persons went down the Boulevards. Marrast addressed them from the balcony of the *National*. They then proceeded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a hearse following in their rear. The small garrison got under arms at the approach of the mob, and covered the hotel. The mob advanced, brandishing muskets and sabres, as if resolved to force a passage. Then the leader of the mob, 'a man in a grey paletôt, with thin face and long hair,' in whom everybody afterwards thought M. Charles Lagrange could be recognised, put out his arm and fired a pistol. Upon this sudden attack the troops fired in return, and the road was covered with dead and wounded. The miserable victims of this terrible machination had scarce fallen, ere their bodies were piled up artistically on the hearse, and the man in the grey paletôt, placing himself at the head,

ordered the procession to set out for the *National* office.

The Government gave the command of the armed power to Marshal Bugeaud, owing to the express wishes of the king; but the indecision prevailing in the Tuileries was fatal. By eleven the next morning Molé had resigned again, and the formation of a Government was entrusted to M. Thiers, conjointly with Odillon Barrot. The new Ministry withdrew the command from Bugeaud, ordered the immediate retirement of the troops, and entrusted to the National Guard the restoration of order. The marshal at first refused to obey, but at length received direct instructions from the king, through the Duc de Nemours. Barrot proceeded to put down the Revolution by holding addresses to the people, and, confident in his popularity, telegraphed to the provinces that all was order, at the very moment that Louis Philippe was signing his abdication! The latter step was brought about by M. de Girardin, supported by a portion of the royal family. The king was so repeatedly told that his abdication could alone stop the insurrection, that, sincerely convinced the middle classes had changed their opinion about him, he laid down, in behalf of his grandson, an authority reclaimed by the persons who had entrusted it to him. Such was the sentiment which dictated the abdication of the king. Two persons of all those present were convinced that the secret societies would not be checked by pieces of paper stuck up on the walls. M. Piscatory cried, "Do not abdicate, sire. Your abdication will be the Republic in

an hour." Marshal Bugeaud also implored the king to stop, for such an act would disarm the troops; the insurrection was approaching, and all that was left was to fight. The queen, who had seen her error of the previous days, supported these remarks, but, unfortunately, the evil genius returned with the Duc de Montpensier, Girardin, and Crémieux. The king was roughly forced to sign his abdication, and all that was left of the lately so powerful monarchy was a lady walking through the mud, leading two children, on her road to the Palais Bourbon. The Assembly was at first disposed in favour of the regency, but the sections, led by Caussidière, invaded the hall, and the knell of royalty had tolled. A provisional government was hurriedly formed, with De Lamartine at its head, who proceeded to the Hôtel de Ville, under the auspices of M. Bocage, a distinguished actor of the Porte St. Martin. As soon as he had gone, Ledru Rollin proceeded to select a government of his own, which also migrated to the Hôtel de Ville, but both found, to their surprise, their places occupied by two other provisional governments, which had also nominated themselves. However, they thought it advisable to come to an agreement, and M. de Lamartine proceeded to draw up his manifesto. For a time he strenuously resisted any mention of the Republic, but a hint that the sections were marching on the Hôtel de Ville decided the question. The Republic was proclaimed, and the magnificent provisional government commenced its duties. The first step after tranquillity was in a measure restored was the establishment of the

national workshops, which were urgently required to support the thousands whom the Revolution had summoned into the streets, and who, had they not been kept at Government expense, would have indulged in the most fearful brigandage. They amounted to about five thousand, but the Government, not daring to avow that it owed its existence to these men, pursued the system till it attained gigantic proportions. By the 15th of June, the workmen amounted to 117,300. The internal dissensions in the Government added to the difficulty entailed by the maintenance of the workmen. The chief trouble was occasioned by Ledru Rollin, who represented the old Jacobin party. "He would have overthrown society," says our author, "to reproduce some great scene designed by David. He sent workmen who wanted a dinner to the Opera; he reanimated agricultural labour by Parisian fêtes, in which the horns of the oxen were gilded before killing them, and double wages were given to young girls to walk about all day." M. Flocon was another revolutionary dramaturge. M. Louis Blanc, although having the least claim on Government, as he had not fought or worked in the Revolution, was a perennial nuisance with his theories about the rights of labour. Albert was, in fact, the only man of action in the extreme party, and observed a modest and reserved attitude which was not without dignity. Opposed to Ledru Rollin and Flocon, who wished to revert to the old Revolution, and Louis Blanc and Albert, who wanted to commence an entirely new one, were grouped Arago, Crémieux, Garnier-Pagès, &c., who desired

merely to hold on by the present Revolution, pacify and consolidate it, that it might eventually become a durable and convenient power.

"Between these parties moved M. de Lamartine, smiling on all, joining none. If we examine the testimony of his colleagues, we find that he claimed a character of personal preponderance, reducing itself to being applauded. He was always held in readiness in a room, with his scarf on, like a high priest in sacerdotal robes. When a mob invaded the Hôtel de Ville, the performer on the lyre was sent for and placed on a table; and there, before the Parisian crowd, which is eminently artistic, M. de Lamartine held his mellifluous addresses, which bore some resemblance to his auditory in having no beginning or end. At starting, this music, which was harmonious, though vague and somewhat monotonous, pleased by its novelty, and at times lulled to sleep the popular delirium. The abuse of it diminished its empire; the mob first ceased to applaud, and ended by ceasing to listen."

It seems, from the general evidence, that Lamartine was all things to all men; with Marrast he blamed the revolutionary intemperance of Ledru Rollin; with Ledru Rollin he deplored the gentleness of Marrast. He flattered the National Guard and caressed Blanqui; he humoured Sobrier and soothed Caussidière. To excuse his relations with Blanqui, M. de Lamartine was in the habit of saying "I conspire with Blanqui as the conductor conspires with the lightning." The excuse may be true; still, it must have been a strange Government

in which conspiracies were required. The Government soon broke up into factions, at the head of which were Ledru Rollin, Louis Blanc, and Blanqui. The last named was the leader of the socialistic party, and inspired terror in the two others, and it may be assumed that the fear of his success alone saved France from the horrors of a Ledru Rollin dictatorship on the 17th of March and the 16th of April. The final measures taken by Ledru Rollin for precipitating the crisis, showed him that he had but a choice of evils before him—the influence of Louis Blanc was menacing, the victory of Blanqui probable. The first would lead to communism, the second to the scaffold. Ledru Rollin hesitated, and at last went to Lamartine and confessed all. The Government had so greatly neglected to consolidate its power that the issue seemed highly doubtful. "Beat to arms," said Lamartine, "and if by chance the Garde Nationale still exists, we are saved." Lamartine had made his will and placed his wife in safety, and he awaited the result. The mob appeared in immense bodies, and all seemed to forebode a sanguinary termination, when the 10th legion came up, and the Garde Mobile cleared the streets. The party of order had gained its first victory.

The elections were scarcely over, and Lamartine's popularity faded, ere the Government again suffered an attack on the 15th of May. A petition was presented on behalf of the Poles, and the Chambers were suddenly invaded by an armed mob: Barbès and Louis Blanc, forgetting that they had the honour of being deputies, ranging

themselves on the side of the invaders, while the former demanded a tax of a milliard on the rich, and the outlawry of his colleagues.* The most fearful confusion ensued: M. Buchez, president of the Assembly, was intimidated into withdrawing the appeal to arms sent out to the National Guard, and a M. Huber declared the National Assembly dissolved. The mob bore Louis Blanc, Sobrier, and Barbès triumphantly on their shoulders, and planted the red cap on the end of a pike upon the tribune. At four o'clock the Garde Mobile cleared the Assembly, and the Government was saved once more. Barbès, Blanqui, Albert, Raspail, and Sobrier disappeared from the scene, but the Government was not strengthened by the victory. A tacit truce was formed, however, and the Socialists and the clubs had determined to defer any attempt till the 14th of July, the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille—when the dissolution of the national workshops played into their hands. The Government was quite unable to support one hundred thousand men any longer, and on the 18th of June determined on sending them to work in the Valley of the Loire. But the partisans of the Socialists prevented their departure, and thus paved the way for the terrible 24th of June, when the workmen were at once the instruments and the victims.

The Government, in the face of the perils which threatened to overwhelm it, had no resource but ap-

* On hearing this proposition, a clubbist exclaimed at the foot of the tribune: "No, no, Barbès, 'tis not that; thou art mistaken: *two hours of pillage!*"—*Moniteur*, 16th May, 1848.

pointing Cavaignac dictator. The forces collected on either side may be estimated at twenty-five thousand insurgents, of whom about twelve thousand were ticket-of-leave men and criminals; while Cavaignac had forty thousand troops, including the Garde Mobile, and without counting the National Guard, which behaved very gallantly. Still the insurrection lasted four days: the army lost three generals who had gained a reputation in Africa, while the insurgents suffered a loss of three thousand killed and fifteen thousand prisoners. On the 28th of June the dictatorship of General Cavaignac was regularly established, and France began to breathe once more after the turmoil she had endured since February. But the Assembly was far from being tranquil: the Constitution of the country had to be drawn up, and the plan for the presidential election settled, and to this must be added a systematic attack on the head of the executive and his ministry. Cavaignac having done his work honourably, and saved the lives of the deputies, they could not, naturally, display their gratitude more forcibly than by opposing every act of his Government. Still it was believed that he had a very good chance of attaining the presidency, for the bourgeoisie was greatly attached to him, as the man who had preserved order—when a new candidate was suddenly announced in the person of Prince Louis Napoleon. Nothing could withstand the prestige of his family name, and the 10th of December saw him elected President of the Republic by a majority of four million votes over Cavaignac, while, to show the vanity of human wishes, we may mention

that Lamartine, who had been the object of popular adoration in March, received just eighteen thousand votes. But even at his installation some far-sighted men were enabled to see there was more in the President than met the eye. On the same evening some men of rank were jesting about the prince, one saying, "Well, will he give us the Empire?" "Do not laugh, gentlemen," M. Marrast replied; "I had an hour's conversation with him to-day. We are all lost. He knows all the power of his name. He knows what he can do; and all that he can, he will do."

But there were great difficulties in Napoleon's path at the outset; the Constituent Asssembly had ardently desired Cavaignac's election, and saw in his defeat a victory over themselves. The President was in the dilemma that he was compelled to check an Assembly which he could not dissolve, by means of a majority which he could not master. Still the Assembly received a violent blow by a motion being carried that it should be dissolved and the general election take place in June next. This was followed by a Bill, introduced by Léon Faucher, to put down the clubs. This caused great excitement, and M. Proudhon, as champion of the Republicans, proposed a *coup d'état* against the President. A slight disturbance connected with the reorganization of the Garde Mobile offering occasion for insurrection, the movement was settled for the 29th of January. But in Louis Bonaparte the clubbists found a very different opponent, and he astonished them by arresting two hundred of the principals during the night, and

displaying such an imposing armed force, that all opposition was futile. The effect of these decisive measures was so great, that General Changarnier repeatedly said at that period, "It would be as easy to re-establish the Empire as to do up a paper of bonbons." The elections were to prove the touchstone of the Assembly, and in reference to them our author writes a curious passage, evidently intended to appeal to present circumstances,

"The provisional government has been sharply reproached for influencing the general elections of 1848. It is incontestable that a government should not substitute itself for the general will of the country, but enlighten it on its choice and acts. When M. Jules Favre, secretary-general of the Ministry of the Interior, asked the commissioners to send him all the lists of candidates, that M. Ledru Rollin might draw them up himself, he doubtlessly exaggerated his right and his duty, and exposed himself to favour factitious candidates who had no root among the people whose wants and wishes they were to personify. When M. Ledru Rollin gave the State moneys to unknown clubbists, and covered the country with canditates without capacity or responsibility, he insulted the majesty of his people; but when he stated in his circular of April 7, 1848, 'If I am asked whether the Government ought to act upon the elections or confine itself to watching the regularity of the operations, I have no hesitation in replying that the Government cannot, without the penalty of abdication or treason, restrict itself to the mere receipt of the election returns. It must work, by means of its agents, to en-

lighten the country.' M. Ledru Rollin was right: *governing means directing.*"

While preparations were being made for the coming elections, and the people, much to M. de Cassagnac's regret, was not receiving the necessary direction in the way of voting, the events taking place in Italy created an intense excitement in France. The Republic had been proclaimed in Rome on the 9th of February, and Charles Albert received a well-merited defeat at Novara for his temporizing policy. There was no hope for the Utopians in Italy establishing any firm government; for when Austria offered, in 1848, to give up the Lombardo-Venetian territory, with the exception of Venice, on the settlement of the national debt, Mazzini compelled the secret societies to reject the offer, for he could not endure the idea that the Sardinian monarchy should be aggrandized. Insurrections broke out through Italy, and the battle of Novara was the final result. The republican party in France, as represented by Ledru Rollin, demanded that France should place her money and her soldiers at the service of the insurrectionists, and liberate Lombardy from the yoke of the Austrian. But the Government preferred to negotiate at Vienna to gain better terms for the Sardinians, and intervene at Rome to secure the return of the Pope with a reasonable measure of administrative reform. A small force was sent off under Oudinot, which landed at Civita-Vecchia on the 25th of April. Garibaldi threw himself into Rome with the fragments of the democratic party, and two hundred French soldiers were taken

prisoners at the gates of the city. Such an insult must be avenged, and a large expeditionary force was voted by the Assembly to carry out the object of the expedition, which was to restore peace to the Papal States, sword in hand. The republican party in the Assembly were furious, and Ledru Rollin brought in an accusation against the President, signed by all the Montagnards, which was disdainfully rejected without discussion.

So soon as the elections were terminated, Ledru Rollin returned to the charge. All the strength of the revolutionary party was combined to renew the attack on the President, and so soon as the foreseen siege of Rome commenced, they summoned the people to arms, while forcing the Montagnard deputies to place themselves at their head. The journals openly recommended the contest, and at length, on the 11th of June, Ledru Rollin, as representative of the clubs, brought on the accusation against Louis Napoleon and his ministers, signed by one hundred and twenty Montagnard members, and threw down the gauntlet by saying "they were prepared to defend the Constitution even with arms in their hands." On the 13th of June an *émeute* took place, which terminated in M. Ledru Rollin's ignominious retreat through a window from the Conservatoire, where the regeneration of democracy was to have been effected. It was a great misfortune for France that she had no statesmen who could comprehend the mission of Louis Napoleon. Even MM. Thiers and Molé, who gladly hailed the return of a Bonaparte to power, were afraid of a reversion to the principles of the

first Empire, and, in a conference which preceded the election of the 28th of December, these two eminent statesmen gravely counselled Prince Louis Napoleon to shave off his moustaches, and thus place himself in harmony with modern society! M. Odillon Barrot, too, had grown quite opposed to the movement of public opinion. He had entered the Republic as a Royalist, and he emerged from the anarchy as a Republican. The sight of the conspiracies and attempts of the demagogues, while putting out the republican fire in others, had only enkindled it in him. He disliked the tendency of the country to revert to monarchical principles, and blamed the President for following the direction. Under these circumstances, Louis Napoleon decided on a change of Ministry, which he carried out on the 31st of October, 1849.

After the condemnation of the conspirators by the High Court of Versailles, thirty-one vacancies had to be filled in the Constituent Assembly, three of these being in Paris. The bourgeoisie and the Socialists coalesced, and succeeded in carrying the election of MM. Carnot, Vidal, and Deflotte, thus proving that the seditious spirit was rife. Under these grave circumstances, the chief members of the majority demanded a conference with the President, and the result was the proposition of that serious law on elections which was carried on the 31st May, 1850, and which restricted that universal suffrage which the President regarded as the basis of his authority. The project was received with great exasperation on the part of the demagogues, the result being

the insurrection which broke out in the south-west under the auspices of the Jeune Montagne. The Government, forewarned of the revolutionary tentatives, held a special council at the Elysée, to which General Changarnier was summoned, and a curious incident took place, which throws a vivid light on the personal views of a celebrated man.

"When asked about the measures he had prepared to conquer the *émeute*, General Changarnier eluded clear and precise explanation, alleging that a commander-in-chief must not make his plans known beforehand. This precaution, which is very wise when taken in the face of an enemy, appeared exaggerated under the present circumstances. On being pressed, he said that a sealed letter would be found giving detailed instructions to his successor. General d'Hautpoul then proposed to study the strategical points of Paris, so that a plan of defence might be drawn up. A map of Paris was required for the purpose, and the President went into his cabinet to fetch one. The Prince had scarce quitted the room, when Changarnier, crossing his arms and looking at some of the members of the council, said, 'Come, I hope that, if there is an *émeute*, we shall not put it down in the interest of that Thomas Diaphorus.'"

On the 5th June the President proposed that his salary should be raised from 600,000 francs to 3,000,000 francs. This met with considerable opposition, and on being referred to a committee, M. de Tocqueville offered to grant the credit to pay debts incurred by the President. This insulting offer was declined. At last

Changarnier interposed, and succeeded in carrying the Bill by a small majority. On the 16th July the Assembly passed the law relative to the press, and followed up this measure by indicting Cassagnac's paper, *Le Pouvoir*, and fining the gérant in five thousand francs. This solemn act, in which the Assembly was judge in its own cause, our author states, did not add to its consideration. The Assembly was then prorogued, and the President proceeded to seek the support of the nation by a progress through France. He was admirably received, and the result was that more than one-half of the general councils demanded a revision of the constitution in order to augment and lengthen the powers of the President of the Republic. In the mean time, the Legitimists and Orleanists sought to strengthen their power by making Changarnier their leader, and he listening to their offers, definitively broke with the President of the Republic. The first public intimation of this was given at the review of Satory, when the infantry marched past the Prince in silence, owing to orders given by General Neumayer, commanding the first division. This verdict on the Prince-President could not be passed over unnoticed; but the Prince, instead of cashiering the general, as was suggested, punished him by giving him the command of two divisions. This step caused a great commotion in the parliamentary commission, for it seemed to be the first blow at General Changarnier's prestige. On the 30th October the Assembly declared that "the position of the general at the head of the army of Paris was a guarantee

of order and security for the Assembly and the country," and it was proposed "to give the general the command of a special corps, destined to protect the Assembly in case of need." There could be no mistake: the contest between the executive and the legislature had commenced, and one must succumb.

On the 2nd of January, a newspaper published an extract from certain permanent instructions given to the generals of the army of Paris by the commander-in-chief. Being utterly at variance with the authority of the Assembly, Prince Louis Napoleon ordered an inquiry on the subject. But the Assembly was not prepared to sacrifice its general, and passed to the order of the day.. The President formed a new Cabinet, and the next day put a limit to Changarnier's authority by breaking up his command. General Changarnier then took a bold step: he went to M. Dupin and requested the command-in-chief of the forces of the palace; so that, if he were deprived of his authority as commander of the army of the President, he might resist as general of the parliamentary army. But M. Dupin was too crafty to fall into the trap, and thus overtly proclaim a civil war; and Changarnier was obliged to yield. The parties soon appreciated their situation. "The Assembly has lost its sword," the *Gazette de France* lamented. The Assembly continued its aggressions until the President astonished them by the announcement that he had chosen a Cabinet entirely distinct from themselves. The Burgraves were dead! and the Assembly was beginning to be regarded with ridicule,

so cleverly did its opponent thwart its schemes. The Assembly then gained a Pyrrhic victory by throwing out the Bill for the presidential *dotation* on the 3rd of February, which only destroyed the majority. This internal defeat was completed by the severity of public opinion, which immediately set about raising subscriptions to present the President with the sum which had been refused him; but he declined all such assistance, and reduced his establishment.

But the great battle was preparing on the revision of the Constitution and prolongation of the presidential power, in favour of which 300,000 persons petitioned. The discussion commenced on the 14th of July, and lasted six days. The result was, that the revision was thrown out, although 446 voted for it and 278 against it, but the constitutional majority demanded three-fourths of the voters, amounting to 543 out of the 724 voters. The country displayed its feeling strongly. Out of the eighty-five general councils, eighty had voted for revision, two against it, and three abstained from any opinion. The Assembly was prorogued, and the members amused their leisure hours by selecting candidates for the Presidency of the Republic. The editor of the *Presse* put forward a highly respectable mason, M. Martin Nadaud. The *Gazette de France* asked for the popular suffrages in behalf of M. Henri de la Rochejacquelein. The Republican papers favoured M. Carnot, while General Changarnier proposed himself in his own newspaper. Finally, the *Journal des Débats* proposed the Prince de Joinville.

On the meeting of the Assembly, the old question about the defence of the Constituent by an armed force was revived, and on this occasion St. Arnaud made his political *début* as defender of the presidential authority. A question asked by General Bedeau with reference to the removal from the barracks of the decree of the 11th of May, 1848, to which St. Arnaud replied by taking the responsibility on himself, led to a tremendous scene of confusion. Changarnier gave the police commissioner orders to shut the outer gates of the palace, while loud shouts were heard, "Arrest all the ministers on their bench." St. Arnaud quitted the Assembly, saying, "There is too much noise in this house: I am going for the guard." General Magnan was warned by an infantry officer to retire, as orders were given to arrest him; and with M. de Maupas he proceeded to head-quarters at the Tuileries. But, strange to say, the Bill was thrown out in the house by a majority of nearly one hundred. This unexpected result overthrew all the preparations for resistance, and the Prince, thinking it was better thus, went out riding with his usual impassibility.

But the time had arrived when the question must be solved, in order to ensure tranquillity to France. The Assembly was agitated by the most contradictory opinions. M. Berryer said, on the 1st of December, "The Prince will never dare to act against the Chamber; the leaders of the army are not on his side, and if he tries to march the troops against the Assembly, he will not find four men and a corporal to obey him."

M. de Falloux judged differently, and believed in an imminent *coup d'état.* He was willing to assist the President against the Mountain, but demanded, in return, the formation of a ministry selected from all the eminent names of the majority, who would take a formal pledge to prolong the power of the President. M. de Heckeren hurried off to inform the Prince of the proposition by which peace could be restored, and the President replied, "I am enchanted at the good news you bring me, but I am very busy just at present; come to me to-morrow after ten o'clock, and we will talk it over." By that time the *coup d'état* had been carried out. The following anecdote is very curious:—

"The commander-in-chief of the army of Paris regularly received each Thursday the general officers of his army at the Tuileries. He was of opinion that a decisive measure was necessary. Without knowing the precise day, he knew it was imminent, and was resolute to aid in its accomplishment. On Thursday, November 26, General Magnan had all the generals around him; they were twenty-one when counted. Full of his idea, and assured by the character of his companions in arms, he formed the very grave resolution of imparting to them a secret which was not entirely his own. This confidence, essentially delicate, would have been very dangerous, if it had not been entrusted to officers guided by duty and honour. The commander-in-chief gave a rapid sketch of the state of France, explained the imperious necessity of saving society menaced by the demagogues, the design he knew the elect of the

people had formed of making a new appeal to the national sovereignty, and the confidence he placed in the army, to protect the liberty of voting from the assaults of the factions. The commander-in-chief stated his own firm resolution of pledging his entire responsibility in an enterprise so eminently national; he expressed a hope of being imitated by the generals of the army of Paris; but, he added, that if there were among them any who believed their conscience would not allow them to enter on this path, he would give them perfect liberty to explain themselves on the spot, trusting to their delicacy and honour not to reveal the overture he had made to them.

"On this clear and energetic appeal, General Reybell stepped forward and took the word on behalf of his comrades. He thanked the commander-in-chief for believing that the twenty generals of the army of Paris would not separate their cause—the cause of military discipline and honour — from that of Prince Louis Napoleon, which was identified with the welfare of nations, families, and civilization. He declared that, in expressing himself thus, he was the faithful interpreter of all the generals; and that, whenever the hour arrived for the Prince and the commander-in-chief to appeal to their devotion, there was not one who did not believe his honour pledged to respond. A hearty shout of assent greeted General Reybell's speech. They all shook hands and embraced; and from that moment it might be said with certainty that France would emerge from the abyss. When the emotion was calmed and

silence restored, General Magnan spoke again: 'Let us all swear on the spot that not one of us will tell a living being of what has occurred here.' The generals took the oath eagerly; and it has been so well kept that we are the first to make known, after more than five years, the existence and results of this memorable meeting."*

On the evening of the 1st of December the usual assembly took place at the Elysée. A large number of guests were present, whom the Prince received with his wonted amenity. The most attentive observer could not have noticed a cloud on his brow, or any preoccupation in his words. At eleven o'clock the doors were closed, and only four persons assembled in the Prince's cabinet. They were General de St. Arnaud, Minister of War; Count de Morny, who took the Ministry of the Interior; M. de Maupas, Prefect of Police; and M. de Beville, colonel on the staff, one of the President's aides-de-camp. The parts allotted them were distinct and precise. M. de Morny, after countersigning the decree dissolving the Assembly, would take the initiative and responsibility of all measures of security in Paris and the provinces; General St. Arnaud would combine and direct the action of the troops, and prevent any disturbances. M. de Maupas, recently appointed to the police, had a difficult task, which required as much discernment as resolution: he had to carry out the arrests

* The twenty-one officers present at this meeting were Generals Magnan, Cornemuse, Hubert, Sallenare, Carrelet, Renault, Levasseur, de Coste, de Bourgon, Canrobert, Dulac, Sauboul, Forey, Rippert, Herbillon, Marulaz, de Courtigis, Korte, Tartas, d'Allonville, and Reybell.

considered necessary. To M. de Beville was entrusted the delicate duty of carrying to the national printing-office, and printing with M. de St. Georges, the official documents: the decree of dissolution, the proclamation to the army, and the appeal to the people. These gentlemen, with M. Mocquard, the Prince's secretary, a man in whom confidence could be placed, received the final instructions from the President, and proceeded to action.

Everything was carried out with perfect success. The rump of the Parliament assembled, and proceeded to pass various laws, but their labours were soon terminated by their being carried off politely to the barracks on the Quai d'Orsay. Some of the deputies fancied there was a gleam of hope, but Colonel Féray undeceived them by saying the whole army was pledged to the *coup d'état*, and would carry it out to the end, at any risk.* On the 3rd of December an insurrection broke out in the Faubourg St. Antoine, which example was followed by the Faubourgs St. Jacques and St. Marceau. In a conference held at three in the afternoon, General Magnan proposed to give the *émeute* time to choose its camp and throw up barricades. There was no doubt about conquering them, but it was necessary to collect

* During the Crimean war, the 42nd line regiment made a curious revelation of their old colonel, General Espinasse, who had commanded them on the 2nd of December. "When we were ordered out before daybreak, we were very anxious about the nature of the duty we were going upon. It was only when we arrived in front of the Palais de l'Assemblée that our doubts were dispelled. If you had led us in the direction of the Elysée, the regiment would not have followed you without some explanations."

them in one body. This plan perfectly succeeded. By nine o'clock in the evening the insurgents were utterly routed, and the troops held military occupation of the whole of Paris. To quote our author:—

"It is here the place to contradict a calumny which emanated from the spite of conquered passions in the days of the struggle. It was said and printed at this period that the President of the Republic had taken twenty millions from the Bank of France to distribute to the troops of the 2nd of December. The truth is far more simple and noble. When the Prince decided, on the night of the 1st of December, on saving society by a decisive measure, all that was left of his personal fortune was a sum of *fifty thousand* francs. He knew that in certain memorable instances the troops had given way before the insurrection through the want of provisions: they had been starved out rather than conquered. He therefore took the last crown that remained to him, and ordered Colonel Fleury to go from brigade to brigade, and man to man, and distribute this last sum to the soldiers who had triumphed over demagogy. Such were the expenses of the 2nd of December, and they may be favourably compared with the accounts of the 24th of February, or of all the Revolutions which have taken place in France."

The loss sustained by the insurrection was naturally considerable. A proclamation of the Minister of War, published on the 3rd, stated that, according to the terms of martial law, every individual constructing or defending a barricade, or taken with arms in his hand, would

be immediately shot. These severe directions were softened down by the humanity of the officers and soldiers, who had forgotten the atrocities committed on the 24th February, 1848, upon the heroic defenders of the Château d'Eau. Many of the insurgents taken prisoners behind barricades, or in the houses where the insurrection had bivouacked, were carried to the prefecture of police. Their total loss amounted to one hundred and seventy-five dead and one hundred and fifteen wounded. History, which cannot but despise any calumny, must protest against the pretended executions of prisoners which were said to have taken place on the Champ de Mars and in the forts round Paris. The French army still was and ever will be the same as in the time of the Vicomte d'Orthes: it is composed of brave soldiers, but not a single hangman.

CHAPTER II.

EDMOND ABOUT.

In the present condition of French literature, when every writer strives to excite the passions and emotions of his readers by startling revelations of family secrets, or by depicting the impure life and concomitant remorse of Traviate, one class of books has been, of necessity, greatly neglected. We allude to those novels which mothers of families need not blush to allow their children to read, in the fear that they may prematurely taste of the bitter fruit of the tree of knowledge. Madame Guizot and Emile Souvestre did their best in their day to fill up this gap, and the success of their exertions was shown in the hearty welcome their novels obtained even in our own most moral circles. M. About has since followed in their track, and may be regarded as their worthy successor, and we will therefore proceed to analyse some of his more important works, in the hope that we may thus induce our readers to peruse them in their entirety, and judge for themselves of their merits.

M. About first made his appearance on the literary stage with his "Grèce Contemporaine," a collection of very agreeable surface-pictures relating to Greek society

of the day. We do not find in this book any very profound appreciation of the causes which have brought that country into its present unexampled condition; but, on the other hand, it is the very satisfactory result of acute observation, and supplies us with a considerable stock of knowledge as to the manners and customs of the descendants of Alcibiades. In the present fast age, when a globule of information has to be administered in a gallon of amusing twaddle, this book fulfilled its mission. Encouraged by his success, but not yet venturing to walk alone in the meandering paths of literature, M. About took up an Italian book, called "Vittoria Savorelli," out of which he wove a novel, which instantly obtained a frenzied success—why, we have not yet been able to discover. "Tolla" is probably well known to our readers in its English form, so we need not delay long over it. We may merely state that it is an account of the loves of a high-born Italian maiden and a still higher-born Italian youth; it passes through the various stages of extreme love, family intrigues, neglect on the part of the youth, death on the part of the lady, and ends by the reader gladly reaching the last page, wondering what it was all about. In truth, it is a fine living example of Canning's Knife-grinder, with his "Story! Lord bless you, I have none to tell, sir!" and, had it not been for the very vivid and apparently truthful sketches of Italian inner life, so rigidly guarded from a stranger's observation, we fear that, despite its puritanic morality, it would have hardly reached a second edition. As the author very justly

observes, "The public forgave" (on the first appearance of "Tolla" in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*) "long dissertations, unpardonable in a writer, but excusable in a man who is learning to write. No one was severe with me, and allowances were made for my youth and inexperience." A controversy was raised as to the originality of the book, which was diligently kept up, and we need not be surprised, therefore, that "Tolla" was in great demand. As a specimen of a writer's first essay we are bound to allow much room for commendation, while allowing still more for improvement.

M. About, feeling that there were some incredulous persons to convince, and that the paternity of "Tolla" could only be assured when he had produced an original novel, soon set to work again, and "Les Mariages de Paris" was the result. The contrast this book furnishes with "Tolla" would, in our view, render persons still more incredulous, for it is a decided falling off, and, by its publication, About gave fair grounds for allowing his original powers to be impeached. It consists of a series of short stories on the hackneyed subject of marriages of affection and those of interest, and is the very fairest possible specimen of light reading. In fact, it is just the book to read—when you have nothing better. We will analyse one story, the best, because it is the shortest, in support of our judgment.

Gorgeon had gained the second tragic prize at the Conservatory once upon a time, and made his *début* at the Odéon. He was hissed by the students, not at all to his friends' surprise, for it is extremely difficult to

succeed in tragedy when your name is Gorgeon. In despair he took to farce, and earned a legitimate success at the Palais Royal. Finding, however, that the more money he earned the more he sank in the slough of debt, he determined on marrying, that he might have money. His choice fell on Pauline Rivière, an actress of seventeen, whose talent and beauty had served as a parachute for countless vaudevilles. But Gorgeon, though a very estimable man, was horridly jealous: he did not like seeing straw-coloured kid gloves at all hours in his *salon*, or the knowledge that they were there during his absence at rehearsals. Unfortunately, his companions soon found out his weak side, and christened him Gorgeon Dandin. The witticisms that buzzed round his ears annoyed him, and domestic felicity was soon wrecked. He quarrelled with his wife, and she, firm in her innocence, would not give way. She said she would not be tyrannized, while Gorgeon replied that he would not be a laughing-stock. At last Gorgeon disappeared, and nothing was heard of him for four months, when it was discovered that he was "starring" at St. Petersburg. His wife became a *de facto* widow, but was a pattern of propriety. She was still undecided whether she would go to St. Petersburg and join her truant, and whether, when she got there, she should embrace him, or scratch out his eyes, when a visitor appeared in her humble fourth floor—a very ugly little man, wrapped up in a fox-skin pelisse.

The widow insisted on his leaving, but he appeased her by assuring her that he was not in love with her,

and she consented to listen to the tempter. He was a Prince Vasilikoff, with a million revenue, but only of the fourteenth class of nobility. Gorgeon had ridiculed him on the stage, and he had sworn most horrible revenge, which he proposed to effect as thus: Pauline was to go to St. Petersburg, where she would find a magnificent hotel as a present, and carriages to any amount, while two or three hundred thousand francs would be deposited with a notary in France on her account. The *quid pro quo* was that she would consent to appear at the theatre with the prince eight times in a front box. In an unhappy hour Pauline consented to become the instrument of the prince's revenge: but she soon found that the part assigned to her was more difficult to act than any she had undertaken in Paris. In vain she wrote to her husband: he was inexorable. The prince's revenge was so complete—for he brought all the laughers on his side—that he made Pauline a present of four nights. Her punishment was just terminating, when the following incident prevented it:—

"A very pleasant vaudeville, called 'The Wrath of Achilles,' was to be acted two evenings in succession. It was almost a *pièce de circonstance. Achille Pangolin* is a modern *Sganarelle*, who believes he finds on all sides proofs of his imaginary disgrace. Everything appears suspicious to him, from the mewing of his cat to the chattering of his parrot. If he finds a walking-stick in his house, he believes it has been forgotten by a rival, and he breaks it in pieces before recognising it as his own. He forgets his hat in his wife's room: he

returns, finds it, and tears it in pieces; he looks in every nook for the owner of this unlucky hat. In the excess of his despair, he determines to end his life, and loads a pistol to blow out his brains. But a scruple arrests him at the decisive moment. He wishes to destroy himself, but does not wish to hurt himself; death attracts him, and the pain repels him. To reconcile his horror of life and his tenderness for himself, he places himself before a mirror, and commits suicide in effigy. The 'Wrath of Achilles' was a decided success. Every *mot* went home. Two hours before the representation Gorgeon had refused to see his wife. He performed to perfection. Unfortunately, the stage-pistol hung fire. A gentleman in the stalls cried in bad French, 'No such luck!'

"After the performance, when the property-man was making excuses, Gorgeon said, 'It is no matter; I have a pistol at home, which I will bring to-morrow.' The next night he brought a double-barrelled pistol, which he showed the property-man, with the remark, 'If the first barrel fails, I have a second.' He played with unexampled energy. In the last scene, instead of aiming at the glass, he turned the barrel towards his wife, and killed her. He then blew out his own brains. This adventure caused a great noise at St. Petersburg; Prince Vasilikoff told it to me. 'Could you imagine,' he said at the end, 'that fellow Gorgeon and Pauline married for love? Such is the way with you Paris people.'"

In the "King of the Mountains," the next book published by About, he appears to have drawn on his

own experiences in Greece for the purposes of a novel. This story shows that the author has still much to learn in the constructive art, for it is disfigured by the exploded scheme of the story being narrated to the author by a Mr. Herman Schultz, a German naturalist, who falls *à nubibus* to tell the tale, and then disappears again. Otherwise it is very amusing, and gives a capital idea of the Greek brigands, who are popularly supposed to represent the genius and bravery of their ancestors. We are glad to find M. About showing them up as what they are—a set of bloodthirsty, cowardly miscreants, a standing disgrace to a Government which was juggled into existence by France and England, and has ended in becoming the greatest impediment in the regeneration of the East.

At the time when M. Schultz was botanizing in Greece, Hadji Stavros, the king of the mountains, was the hero of Athens, but the scourge of Attica. He was certainly an extraordinary man. The son of a Greek priest, he had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem when twenty years of age, and thus secured the title of Hadj. On his return home he was taken prisoner by a pirate, and took to that profession himself. The Greek insurrection furnished him the opportunity for fishing in troubled waters. He never knew exactly whether he was a brigand or an insurgent, a commander of thieves or partisans. His hatred for the Turks did not blind him so that he declined to plunder Greek villages. Such wise impartiality rapidly augmented his fortune. The peasants flocked to his banner; Lord Byron dedicated

an ode to him; the poets and orators of Paris compared him to Epaminondas, and even to Aristides; flags were embroidered for him in the Faubourg St. Germain; subsidies were sent him. He received money from England, from France, from Russia; probably, too, from Turkey, for he was a true Pallikar. At the close of the war he was besieged in the Acropolis of Athens with several other chiefs, each keeping his treasure by the side of his bed. Suddenly the roof fell in, and killed everyone except Hadji Stavros, who was puffing his nargilleh in the open air. He succeeded to the property of his companions, and all thought he deserved it. An unfortunate event, however, destroyed Stavros's calculations: peace was made, and the Powers that had liberated Greece tried to convert it into a kingdom. Ill-sounding words, such as government, army, public order, buzzed round the ears of the Pallikar. He laughed loudly when told that his estates were comprised in a *sous préfecture*, but became serious when a collector called for the taxes. He put him out of the door quietly, after easing him of what he had already collected. The Government picked a quarrel with Hadj, and he took to the mountains once more. He summoned a band around him, and then married a rich heiress of one of the best families in Laconia, thus becoming allied to the highest personages in the realm. His wife died after giving birth to a daughter, and Hadj travelled in the pursuit of knowledge, and to amass a royal dower for his daughter. He formed an association of brigandage (limited liability); he travelled in England,

and was present at an election in Yorkshire, which inspired him with profound reflections upon the blessings of a constitutional government. On his return home he put his new knowledge to good profit; he burnt a great number of villages in the service of the Opposition; he destroyed others for the Conservative interest. When it was considered advisable to overthrow a ministry, it was sufficient to apply to Hadj; he proved by incontestable arguments that security could only be obtained by a change of Cabinet, As was natural, so great a man was courted by all parties, and was offered a place in the Government, and the rank of brigadier-general. His country had to deplore his refusal of such offers; he was too old for service, and through the mere force of habit feared that if he had to command troops the sight of the uniform would compel him to fire at them. This great man was falsely accused of cruelty to his prisoners, but that was very unjust. When a ransom was unpaid, he cut off the heads of prisoners as a purely commercial transaction; that was his way of protesting a bill. It is true that he murdered in cold blood two girls of fourteen because their mother did not pay their ransom in time; but then he killed them as a warning, and the proof is, that ransoms have been regularly paid ever since. Is it surprising, we ask, that the modern Greeks should regard Hadji Stavros as one of the greatest heroes of their country?

M. Schultz was destined to form a closer acquaintance with the king of the mountains than he could obtain by hearsay reports in Athens. The Athens *Siècle* an-

nounced officially that the king had suffered a severe defeat, and had been chased by the troops into the marshes of Marathon. This news caused great joy among the visitors to Athens, as they could now make excursions in the vicinity with safety. Among others who went out besides M. Schultz, were Mrs. Simons, an English lady, and her daughter. Need we add that, for the purposes of our story, they fell into the hands of Hadji Stavros, whose defeat was a scheme to procure prisoners, just as Rembrandt killed himself to augment the value of his pictures? The following sketch is picturesque:—

"Hadji Stavros was seated, tailor fashion, on a square carpet, in the shade of a willow; four secretaries and two servants were grouped around him; a lad of some sixteen years was incessantly occupied in filling, lighting, and cleaning his masters' chibuks. He bore at his girdle a tobacco-pouch, embroidered with fine gold and pearls; and a pair of silver pincers to take up a coal. Another servant spent the day in preparing cups of coffee, glasses of water, and confectionery, to refresh the royal mouth. The secretaries, seated on a rock, wrote on their knees with cut reeds. Each of them had within reach a copper box containing reeds, knife, and writing materials. Some tin cylinders, like those in which our soldiers keep their furlough, served as depôts for the archives. The paper was not of native manufacture, for a good reason—each sheet bore the word BATH in large letters. The king was a handsome old man, in a marvellous state of preservation, upright, thin, supple as a watch-spring, clean, and

shining as a new sabre. His long white moustaches hung down beneath his chin like two marble stalactites. The rest of his face was scrupulously shaved, and the head bare as far as the crown, where a large tress of white hair rolled round his cap. The expression of his features appeared to be calm and thoughtful. A pair of small light blue eyes, and a squarely-cut chin, announced an inflexible will. His face was long, and the set of wrinkles rendered it still longer. He wore the dress of the natives of the Archipelago. His red cap formed a large crease at its base, round his forehead. His attire consisted of a vest of black cloth, bound with black silk, huge trousers absorbing more than twenty yards of blue cotton, and long Russia leather boots, supple and solid. The only rich part of his costume was a waist-belt embroidered in gold and stones, worth about one hundred pounds. It contained in its folds a purse of embroidered cashmere, a kandjar of Damascus in a silver sheath, a long pistol mounted in gold and rubies, and the ramrod belonging to it. Hadji Stavros stood motionless among his servants, only moving the extremity of his fingers and his lips; the latter to dictate his correspondence, the former to count the beads of his rosary. It was one of those handsome rosaries made of clouded amber, which are not used to keep account of prayers, but to amuse the solemn indolence of the Turks."

The correspondence on which the king was engaged, and which M. Schultz was compelled to listen to, was certainly a strange medley. The first letter was to Messrs. Barley and Son, of London, bankers, relating to

the management of twenty-five thousand pounds he had entrusted to them; among other items, he ordered the sale of his shares in the Royal British Bank, which he thought was going wrong. The next was to his daughter, then at school in Athens, announcing the arrival of Sir Walter Scott's works, and the steel machine to make her dress stick out; closing with an injunction on her to learn foreign languages sedulously, for, the king adds, "you are not born to live in this small, absurd country, and I would sooner see you dead than married to a Greek. The daughter of a king can only marry a prince. I do not mean a contraband prince, like all our Fanariotes, who boast their descent from the emperors of the East, and whom I would not have for my servants, but a reigning and crowned prince. Some very suitable ones can be found in Germany, and my fortune will allow me to select one for you. If the Germans have been able to come and reign among us, I do not see why you should not go and reign among them." The last document was a "Report of the Operations of the National Company of the King of the Mountains." It was addressed to the shareholders, and, after alluding to the unpleasant interference of foreign troops, which checked the expansion of domestic industry, it showed a dividend of eighty-two per cent. The concluding paragraph is a gem: "Such, gentlemen, are the results of our last campaign. You can now judge of the future reserved for us on the day when a foreign occupation ceases to weigh heavily on our country and our occupations."

The king then found time to attend to his prisoners, and fixed the ransom of the ladies at four thousand pounds. Fortunately, they were related to the house of Messrs. Barley, and paid their ransom out of the monarch's own funds. We may dismiss them, and turn our attention exclusively to M. Schultz, who had no chance but evasion. He tried many experiments, and ended by drowning his watchman, Vasili, whom the monarch deplored like a son. His funeral requiem is magnificent:—

"Do you know that he was the boldest of my companions? I will not detract from the personal merit of those who hear me, but Vasili displayed a blind devotion, intrepid obedience, and a zeal which was adapted for all circumstances. No labour was too rude for his courage, no execution was repugnant to his fidelity. He would have strangled the whole kingdom if I had bidden him do so. He would have gouged his best friend at a sign of my finger. And he is lost to me! Poor Vasili! When I have a village to burn, a curmudgeon to put on the gridiron, a woman to cut in pieces, a child to flay alive, who will take his place? .... For four generations all his ancestors have been hanged or decapitated: not one died in his bed. Scarce six years ago his own brother perished in Epirus by the brutal tyranny of the law; he had assassinated a Mussulman. Devotion and courage were hereditary in that family. Nor did Vasili ever fail in his religious duties. He gave to the churches, he gave to the poor. On Easter-day he offered a wax candle larger than all the

others. He would have died sooner than violate the law of fasting, or eat meat on a day of abstinence. He was saving up enough money to retire to a monastery on Mount Athos. And, alas! he is lost to me for ever!"

But the manes of the victim must be appeased, and the king refrained from offering up the assassin on the tomb, merely because he knew that the dead man would have been one of the first to protest against such a lamentable sacrifice of a ransom. He, however, selected a mode of punishment which amply answered the end, and had the additional charm of not costing a penny to any one. After the funeral obsequies had been performed with great splendour and dignity, the turn came for M. Schultz to play his part, by receiving a punishment which would spare the brigands the trouble of watching him for some time. The king determined to give him the bastinado, which he knew, from personal experiences, did not kill, though it was particularly unpleasant. M. About describes the sensations experienced so minutely, that we are led to believe that, like the chaplain in "Never too Late to Mend," he has allowed the experiment to be tried on himself, to judge what others suffer from it—

"I did not faint, as you are aware it is not in my nature, so I lost nothing. I felt every blow of the stick in succession. The first was so furious that I thought there would be no occasion for the rest. It caught me exactly in the centre of the foot; but my foot did not pain me. I fancied that the bones in my poor legs were breaking to pieces. The second blow hit me lower, just

below the heels; it gave me a violent shock, which shook my spine, and filled my palpitating brain with fearful confusion. The third caught me on the toes, and produced an acute and piercing sensation, which caused the whole of my body to shudder, and made me believe for a moment that the point of the stick had struck the end of my nose. The blood burst forth for the first time, I believe. The blows succeeded in the same order, and on the same spots, at equal intervals. I had sufficient courage to keep silence at the two first; I cried at the third, howled at the fourth, and groaned afterwards. At the tenth, my flesh had not the strength left to complain: I was silent. . . . The last blow of the twenty fell on a bleeding but insensible mass of flesh. Pain had almost paralysed me."

Maddened with pain and rage, M. Schultz poured forth every execration mind could conceive or tongue utter; he insulted the king's mother, his wife, and his daughter; but it was all to no effect. At last, he plucked a pistol from the belt of one of the brigands, and fired it point-blank at the Hadj. Even this had no power to move him; but at last he succeeded; he told him of the skilful way in which the ladies had swindled him out of the ransom by his advice, and the king's fury knew no bounds. He determined on the most awful revenge; but so great was his rage, that he could not hit on any mode sufficiently exemplary. He asked advice of his followers, and they made suggestions terrible enough in their atrocity for any moderate man. Thus, one proposed to pull out some of his teeth, put a

bit in his mouth, and make him run till he dropped from fatigue. Another wished to break boiling eggs under his armpits. He had tried it on a woman in Megara, and it had afforded considerable fun. The third suggested that a rock, weighing five hundredweight, should be put on his chest, which would make him put out his tongue and spit blood. But none of these availed; nor would the king be satisfied when it was further proposed to pour vinegar in his nostrils and drive thorns under his nails; or feed him with salt meat without allowing him to drink; or to suffer him to die of hunger. None of these schemes satisfied the vengeance of the king; he was determined that poor Schultz, for robbing him of four thousand pounds, should shed drop by drop of blood, like a bad debtor paying penny instalments. The king retired to revolve his plans of revenge, while M. Schultz was left to the mercy of the gang. One wounded brigand hit on a brilliant scheme of torture: the prisoner's hands being tied behind his back, he was laid down by the side of the patient's bed, who began plucking out one hair after the other. At first the pain was slight, but it soon grew maddening. The punishment only ceased to assume a new shape. M. Schultz was laid before a burning fire and semi roasted. In his despair he put his hand in his pocket and drew out a blessed parcel of arsenic, with which he seasoned the king's lamb's fry, hoping that he would thus rid the world of an intolerable nuisance.

But his sufferings were destined to end sooner than

he had anticipated. An American friend of his had carried off the king's daughter, and only consented to give her up in return for M. Schultz. We need not dwell any longer on the story, but refer those who are desirous to know the *dénouement* to the book itself, which we heartily recommend them, as giving a very truthful account of the state of Greece. One scene of fraternization between the brigands and gendarmes is admirable, and we regret we cannot find space for it. In conclusion, M. About, while allowing that the story of the "King of the Mountains" is only a fiction, justly adds, "My kind Athenian friends, the truest histories are not always those which have really taken place."

"Germaine" is by far the best of M. About's books.* The author, encouraged by his success, has grown bolder, and no longer hesitates to launch some of those *petits mots* which make the fortune of French literary men. The story, though not very natural, and slightly exaggerated, is, for all that, very interesting; and M. About, while venturing on the slippery ground of illicit love, has managed very cleverly to steer clear of any rock of offence. But this will be best seen by giving a slight sketch of the story.

The first scene introduces us to the Duchess de la Tour d'Emblée, in the last stage of distress, even selling her wedding-ring to procure a breakfast for M. le Duc, who must not go without. There may be beggar duchesses in France, but not having the honour to move in that

* This article was written in 1857. A notice of other and more recent works will be found in these volumes.

society, we cannot decide such a moot point. However, the fact we are concerned with is, that the ducal family had sunk from bad to worse, and were now starving, or very nearly so. How that had been brought about will be best seen from the following extract:—

"Duke Cæsar de la Tour d'Embleuse, son of an *émigré* most faithful to the king and most hostile to his country, was rewarded magnificently for his father's services. In 1827, Charles X. appointed him Governor-General of our possessions in Western Africa. He was hardly forty years of age. During twenty-eight months' residence in the colony he held his ground against the Moors and the yellow fever: then he demanded leave to return to Paris and marry. He was rich, thanks to the indemnity of a milliard, and he doubled his fortune by marrying the fair Marguerite de Bissou, who had sixty thousand francs a year. The king signed the contract on the same day as the ordonnances, and the duke found himself married and shelved at one stroke. The new Government would gladly have enrolled him in the list of *transfuges;* and it was even asserted that Casimir Perrier made him some advances. He disdained employment of any nature, through pride in the first place, and secondly, through an invincible sloth. Whether he had expended in these years all his stock of energy, or that the easy life in Paris held him by an irresistible attraction, his only labour during ten years had been to show his horses in the Bois, and his yellow kid gloves in the Opera stalls. All seemed good to him; the enjoyments of the table, the satisfaction of vanity, the

emotions of play, and even the austere joys of domesticity. He displayed at home the eager attentions of a young husband, and in the world the impetuosity of an emancipated heir. His wife was the happiest woman in France; but she was not the only one to whom he ensured felicity. He wept with joy on the birth of his daughter in the summer of 1835, and in the excess of his happiness he purchased a country villa for an Opera dancer, with whom he was madly in love. His dinners at home were unrivalled, except by the suppers he gave at his mistress's house. The world, which is always indulgent to men, pardoned him for thus squandering his life and fortune. It was allowed that he acted like a gentleman, for his pleasures abroad never caused a painful echo at home. How could he be justly reproached for expending on all sides the superabundance of his purse and heart? No woman pitied the duchess; and, in fact, there was no reason to pity her. He sedulously avoided compromising himself; he never appeared in public but with his wife, and he would sooner have missed a rendezvous than allow her to go to a ball alone. This double mode of life, and the caution with which a gentleman knows how to conceal his pleasures, soon attacked his capital. Nothing is dearer in Paris than shade and discretion. The duke was too great a gentleman to bargain with anybody. He could never refuse anything to his own wife, or to another person's. You must not believe he was ignorant of the enormous breaches made in his fortune, but he calculated on play to repair them. Men to whom fortune has come when

asleep are accustomed to place unlimited confidence in destiny. . . . . When 1848 arrived he was hopelessly ruined."

For eight years the duke, Micawber-wise, waited for something to turn up, in a little set of rooms over the stables at the Hôtel de Sanglié. Many opportunities of making money were offered him, but he refused them through fear of lowering himself. "I am willing to sell my house," he would say, "but I cannot lend my name." Thus he slowly descended the social ladder, abusing the name he did not wish to compromise; and thus it was that on the 1st of January, 1853, his wife sold her wedding-ring. It is unfortunate that you cannot live in Paris without money, although credit is the mainstay of commerce. You can procure many things without paying for them, when you can throw on the tradesman's counter a great name. You can furnish your house and stock your cellar for nothing, but there are a thousand daily expenses which can only be satisfied with ready money. It is often more easy to buy a watch than a cabbage. This was the case with the duchess: and her friends had left her one after the other. The friendship of women is certainly more chivalrous than that of men, but neither sex has an enduring affection for others than their equals. A delicate pleasure is felt in climbing two or three times up a precipitous staircase and sitting down full dressed by a poor bed, but there are few persons so heroic as to live familiarly with friends who are down in the world. To add to her sorrows, her daughter Germaine was attacked with consumption, and

the medical man had given up all hope. At this crisis of the ducal fortunes, a *deus ex machinâ* appeared in the shape of the family doctor. But the circumstances will require explanation.

In 1838, a worthy naval captain, M. de Chermidy, had laid his heart and epaulette at the feet of Honorine Lavinage, who kept a tobacconist's shop at Toulon. Although thousands of worshippers had tried to turn her head, she had vowed to be virtuous till she had found a husband, and she kept her word. The officers had given her the name of "Cracker," on account of her heart; the bourgeois christened her "Ulloa," because she was besieged by the whole of the French navy. M. de Chermidy was preferred to his rivals because of his delicious candour, and his dreams of happiness were only dispelled by an excellent naval appointment, which kept him abroad almost continuously. His wife lived discreetly for ten years, the only events which signalized her reign being the failure of a charcoal contractor and the dismissal of two paymasters. She then found it advisable to migrate to Paris, where she arrived with her savings in the shape of fifteen thousand pounds, and lived magnificently, although her fair fame was not tarnished. In 1850, her husband was weak enough to pay her a visit, but on seeing his dear Honorine dressed in a manner which represented at least three years' pay, he made a tack, and never returned. The truth was, that Madame de Chermidy had fixed her affections during his absence on the Count de Villanera, who soon grew madly in love with her, and committed

all those extravagances of which a young man can be guilty. She gave birth to a son by him, whom the count insisted on recognising as his own, but unfortunately the lady's husband was in the way, and had visited Paris just in time to save appearances. In this plight, Madame de Chermidy hit on a brilliant idea; the Count de Villanera was to marry some young lady of high rank in such a state of health that her death might be sure: her son would thus be recognised, and she could recal her count when the lady had departed from this vale of tears. The duke's daughter was the very victim required, and the doctor made the proposition with the alluring bait of two thousand *per annum* settled on the parents.

We need not add that the bargain was concluded: M. de Villanera married Germaine when, apparently, in the last stage of consumption, and the happy party set off for Italy, leaving Madame de Chermidy anxiously to count the hours till her rival's death. In the meanwhile, she drew over the old duke to her side, who soon grew madly in love with her, and thus she obtained all requisite information as to how matters were going on in Corfu. But time slipped away, and still the countess would not die; on the contrary, she was growing stronger, and Madame de Chermidy determined on helping her along the road. For this purpose, she selected a ticket-of-leave man, to be sent as a servant to the family, and hinted to him that fifty pounds a year would be his on the death of his lady. This worthy commenced operations by exhibiting minim doses of

arsenic, which, however, had the counter effect, for the lady grew rapidly better. The awakening love between Germaine and her husband is admirably described by M. About, and he allows us to foresee many happy years for them; when the crisis arrives: Germaine kills herself apparently, from taking an overdose of iodine, in her joy at her husband's love and hopes of recovering speedily. The news of her hopeless condition reaches Paris simultaneously with that of M. de Chermidy's death in China, and the widow is triumphant. She determines on setting out for Corfu at once, to claim her rights, while the old duke, who is almost maddened by frustrated hopes, gives his wife the slip, and follows her.

But Madame de Chermidy had reckoned without her host; the news of Germaine's death was premature, and she arrives in Corfu to find her rival in a fair way of recovery. The scene which occurred between the two ladies is very powerfully described:—

"Madame de Chermidy recognised at the first glance the woman she had only seen once, and whom she never expected to see again in this world. Although naturally so cool, she recoiled like a soldier who sees the bridge blown up over which he is just going to pass. She was not the woman to nurse herself with hopes; she judged her position, and leaped to a conclusion at once. She saw her rival cured, her lover confiscated, her son in the hands of another woman, and her future lost. The fall was the ruder, because she fell from such a height. When the Titans had piled up mountain on mountain, they did not feel the less severely the lightning which

levelled them. The hatred she had felt for the young countess, since the day she had begun to fear her, suddenly attained colossal proportions, like those theatrical trees which the stage machinist sends up from the boards to the drops. The first idea that crossed her mind was criminal. She asked herself why she should not rend with her hands the paltry obstacle which separated her from happiness. She was for an instant one of those Thyades who tore in pieces tigers and lions. She repented having forgotten at the hotel a Corsican poniard, which was always her companion. Her thoughts reverted to that familiar weapon; she seized it in her mind, she caressed it in imagination. She then thought of the sea, which bathed the end of the garden. Nothing was easier or more tempting than to carry off Germaine, lay her in three feet of water, stifle her cries beneath the tide, and compress her efforts till a final convulsion made room for another Countess of Villanera. Fortunately, the distance between thought and action is longer than between arm and head. Besides, the little Gomez was there, and his presence probably saved Germaine's life. More than once the limpid glance of a child has paralysed a criminal hand. The most perverted beings experience an involuntary respect before this sacred age, which is more august than senility. Old age is like tranquil water in which all the impurities of life have sunk to the bottom; infancy is a torrent rushing from the mountain, which may be stirred up without fear of troubling the waters, because they are perfectly pure. Old people have the

knowledge of good and evil; the ignorance of childhood is like the spotless snow of the Jungfrau, which no human footstep has sullied."

Madame de Chermidy's attempts to recover her truant lover are in vain: he is enjoying, for the first time, the pure joys of wedded love, and the voice of his old charmer is innocuous. In vain she threatens to commit suicide, after making a will in favour of her son; and, as a last resource, she summons a ticket-of-leave man to a nocturnal meeting, when she offers him 100,000 francs to remove her detested rival. But the forçat is a man of talent: after hearing all that Madame de Chermidy had to offer, he consented to commit a murder, but the victim was altered. He saw that he had better chances of safety in putting Madame de Chermidy out of the world, and he proceeded to carry it into effect with the celebrated poniard of which mention has already been made. But a new actor suddenly appears on the scene in the shape of the old duke, who, in his fatuity, had determined on seeking his beloved Honorine. The scene descriptive of his research is one of the most powerful in the book:—

"A profound darkness reigned both within and without the house, but the old madman fancied he could see Madame de Chermidy kneeling at the foot of the bed, with her head bowed between her hands, and opening her sweet rosy lips in prayer. In order to attract her attention, he tapped gently at the window; but no one replied. He then fancied he saw her sleeping: for the most contradictory hallucinations

followed each other in his mind. He reflected for a long time on means to reach her without startling or frightening her. To gain his object he felt capable of anything, even to dig a hole in the wall with no other tools than his fingers. While tapping the windows, he felt that the panes were set in a framework of lead. He attempted to remove a pane by means of his nails. He set to work with such energy that he eventually succeeded in his task. His nails were repeatedly bent back on the lead, or broken off on the glass; his fingers, cut in twenty places, were bleeding all at once; he took no heed of this, or if he stopped from time to time, it was to lick off the blood, and listen to sounds within, in the assurance that Honorine was still sleeping. When the square had been thus slightly loosened, he took it gently by the extremity, and gradually pulled it towards him, stopping each time that the glass cracked, or a too violent pressure shook the whole of the window. At last his patience was rewarded. The glass remained in his hands. He laid it down noiselessly on the sand in the allée, made a bound, while laying a finger on his lips, and returned to inhale the air from the room by the opening he had made. His chest expanded from the voluptuous sensation; he breathed again the first time during ten days.

"He thrust his hand into the room, felt the interior of the window, found the bolt, and seized it firmly. The squares of glass being small, lacerated his arm and impeded his movements; but at last the window yielded with a creaking noise. The duke was startled at the

sound, and thought that all was lost. He then fled to the end of the garden, and scaled a tree, his eyes being fixed on the house, his ear opened to every sound. He listened for a long time, and heard nothing save the gentle and melancholy croak of the frogs by the road-side. He came down from his post of observation, and moved on hands and feet to the window, at one moment lowering his head, not to be seen, at another raising it to see and hear. He returned to the spot whence fear had driven him, and assured himself that Honorine was still sleeping. The window was wide open; the night air entered the house without awaking the fair sleeper. The duke stepped in and glided along the room. Joy and fear made him tremble like a tree shaken by the wind. He tottered, yet did not dare hold on by the furniture. The chamber was encumbered with objects of every description, boxes open and shut, and even furniture overthrown. He guided himself through this disorder with infinite precaution. He moved on tiptoe, grazing each object without touching it, and extending his bleeding fingers in the darkness. At each step he took he muttered in a low voice, 'Honorine, are you there? Do you hear me? It is your old friend—the most unfortunate, the most devoted of your friends! Do not be alarmed; fear nothing—not even that I will reproach you. I was mad at Paris, but the journey has changed me. It is a father who has come to console you. Do not kill yourself. I should die of the blow!' He stopped, and listened attentively. He could only hear the beating of

his own heart. Fear assailed him: he sat down for a moment on the ground, to calm his emotion and check the bounding current in his veins. 'Honorine,' he cried, as he rose again, 'are you dead?' It was Death in person that replied to him. He stumbled against an article of furniture, and his hands were bathed in a sea of blood. He fell on his knees, rested his arm on the bed, and remained till day in the same posture. He did not ask himself how this misfortune could have happened. He felt no surprise or regret; the blood rushed to his head, and all was over. His head was only an open cage from which reason had fled. He spent the remaining hours of the night bending over a corpse, which gradually chilled till morning."

On the discovery of the awful deed, the duke was at first suspected of being the assassin; but a livery button and lock of hair led to a discovery. The duke, however, remained hopelessly insane, and death put a speedy end to an ill-spent life. As for Germaine, her happiness was only just commencing with the recovery of her health, and we have no reason to believe that the Count of Villanera followed the example of other married men in Paris, or ever became satiated with the connubial felicity which always awaited him at home.

This slight sketch of a deeply interesting story will prove to our readers that M. About has at length hit on the right path: he possesses a considerable degree of talent, and can employ it most worthily in the description of social life. We have, of course, been unable to follow the story of Germaine's wedded griefs and joys

closely, but we can recommend our readers to judge for themselves; the story is well worthy of perusal, as we trust we have shown. Very great delicacy is displayed in the description of the nascent affection which Germaine feels for her husband, and the transition from horror to interest, and thence to love, is very artistically treated. But, above all, we must speak in terms of the highest praise of the healthy tone of morality which pervades the whole of the book, rendering it thus a worthy counterpart to the celebrated story of "La Robe de Nessus," in which the tempter gains the victory. We again repeat, that if our lady readers desire to form a true appreciation of a French novel, without entertaining any apprehension of having their feelings of delicacy outraged, they cannot do better than choose a guide, philosopher, and friend, in the person of the subject of our present sketch.

CHAPTER III.

FRANCE IN 1793.

THE ninth volume of M. Louis Blanc's admirable History of the French Revolution possesses all the sterling qualities of those which have preceded it. In style lucid and compact, almost photographic in details, like Macaulay in his "Bataviad," diligent in the collection of comparatively trivial incidents, which may complete the harmony of the whole; punctilious in the extreme, and never sacrificing truth to effect, as is the fault of too many French historiographers, M. Louis Blanc combines the severe and painstaking research of the German with the brilliancy peculiar to the Gaul. No subject has been more sedulously handled under almost every possible light than that of the French Revolution: Monarchist, Republican, Frondeur, and Democrat, all have reproduced the impressions made upon them by that wonderful phase of their national history; but for Louis Blanc was reserved the exceeding merit of publishing a narrative as striking in its details as it is admirable for impartiality. And, in truth, he must be a poor scribe who could not excite the interest of his readers on such

* Histoire de la Révolution Française. Par M. Louis Blanc. Vol. ix. Paris.

a topic: however bald his narrative might be, the entrancing interest of the incidents he has to detail will amply compensate for all short-comings. Doubly grateful must we then feel to M. Blanc when he offers us everything which can render a book attracting and instructive.

We have been the more struck with M. Blanc's narrative of the events of 1793, as we have lately had an occasion to peruse a very ponderous quarto work on the Revolutionary wars, published for the special instruction of our forefathers. It is, perhaps, permissible, in time of war, to *dénigrer* the character of your foe, and we had examples enough of this during the Crimean campaigns, but it is a little too bad that, in England, no one takes the trouble to put matters in their right light. We are gradually beginning to allow that Bonaparte was not the monster Pitt and Gillray would have made him out, and our opinion of Robespierre has assumed a favourable change since Carlyle undertook the defence of the "sea-green incorruptible;" but we have yet much to learn about the causes of the French Revolution, and it is to be hoped that Louis Blanc's work may be translated and published in a popular form for the enlightenment of general readers, who are too apt to derive their historical education from books which should be unanimously exploded. Were this not the case, there would be no demand for a new edition of Russell's "Modern Europe," in which the ignorance is only equalled by the bigotry displayed.

The history of 1793, as displayed to us by M. Louis

Blanc, comprises a large portion of the Revolution. At that period France offered an unparalleled example: menaced by external foes, and torn by internal dissension, she succeeded in emerging triumphantly from her trials, through the mere force of will displayed by a great nation. Such a splendid picture of national energy had never been witnessed before. The task entrusted to the Government was arduous in the extreme: the Constitution had to be established while the Allies were thundering at the gates of France, while civil war was raging in La Vendée, while Lyons was in a flame, and Toulon had been delivered over to the English. More dangerous, perhaps, than all this were the intrigues carried on by the Girondists, which menaced the nation with a reign of anarchy, and gave the Royalists ample opportunities for carrying out their designs. At this moment, Charlotte Corday, alarmed by the impending fate of the Girondist party, stabbed Marat, and thus forced on that Reign of Terror which led to such deplorable results. While we cannot go so far with Mr. Bayle St. John as to throw odium on the personal character of the young assassin—and, indeed, our author is careful to furnish proofs of her moral innocence—we find in the volume now before us many *indicia* which strip her of much of that halo which poets and painters have striven to invest her with. By her own confession, she would have escaped if she could have found the opportunity, and this reduces her at once to the level of an ordinary assassin. Again, on being searched, her baptismal register was found on her person; it is evident,

then, that she had no intention of dying *incognita*, as she wrote to her father from her dungeon. At the same time, however, M. Louis Blanc labours to bring forward evidence of her innate modesty. Harmand (de la Meuse) mentions, as a circumstance of which he was himself witness, that Chabot, perceiving a folded paper in her bosom, and making an attempt to seize it, she threw herself back with such vivacity that the pins and strings that held up her robe gave way. Her bosom was thus entirely exposed, and, in spite of the promptness with which she bent down her head to her knees, to conceal it, her modesty would have suffered cruelly had it not been for the delicate conduct of those who surrounded her. Her hands were bound: they hastened to unfasten them, that she might herself repair this accidental disorder, which she did with her face turned to the wall. The account of the execution we must describe in our author's own words:—

"She was led to punishment in the red shirt then the usual dress of assassins. It was seven in the evening. Dense clouds veiled the sky and presaged a storm, which soon burst forth. The people followed the mournful cart in silence, while Charlotte looked calmly round on the surrounding objects. At the foot of the scaffold a slight pallor, immediately followed by more vivid colouring, suffused her lovely face. When the executioner proceeded to remove a portion of her garments, her features expressed a feeling of offended modesty, which reminds us of that sublime expression of Madame Elisabeth at the moment when the executioner tore off the

handkerchief which covered her bosom: 'In the name of your mother, sir, cover me!' After the execution, one of the assistants, having seized the head to display it to the people, had the infamy to strike it on the cheek —an abominable act of cowardice, which was greeted by an intense and almost universal groan. The head was then pale, but exquisitely beautiful. When held up a second time, the face had become, or was fancied to have become, suffused with a bright tinge, as if the indignation at the outrage had survived the punishment. The miserable fellow who had insulted death was cast into prison and publicly branded."

The proud attitude assumed by Charlotte Corday, her youth, her beauty and courage, excited a passionate admiration among many. A great poet composed in her honour an ode as an apology for assassination :—

"Son œil mourant t'a vue en ta superbe joie,
Féliciter ton bras et contempler ta proie.
Ton regard lui disait : 'Va, tyran furieux,
Va, cours frayer la route aux tyrans tes complices :
Te baigner dans le sang fut tes seules délices :
Baigne-toi dans le tien, et reconnais les dieux.'"

Among other adopted sons of the Revolution was a deputy from Mayenne, Adam Lux, who went mad about Charlotte Corday's deed. He went so far as to publish a pamphlet, in which he invoked death on the guillotine, which he should regard henceforth as an altar, and ended by proposing that a statue should be erected to the heroine, with the motto, "Greater than Brutus!" His wish, as regarded death, was gratified. But the strangest deduction our author makes from Charlotte

Corday's deed is that she only carried out the principles Marat had openly preached. When she said before the Revolutionary Tribunal, "I killed one man to save one hundred thousand," this was only another form of Marat's request for five hundred heads in order to save five hundred thousand.

The most extraordinary honours were paid to Marat: he had his temples, his triumphal arches; his bust was placed in many houses as a preservation against suspicion. His heart was enshrined in a magnificent urn; his remains were preserved in the Pantheon, in the place of Mirabeau's, and a sort of pyramid was erected in the Carousel, in which were deposited his bust, his bath-dress, his inkstand, and his shirt, and a sentinel was placed over them, who one night died of cold—or horror.

But the Government had soon other matters to attend to besides erecting monuments to Marat. At Lyons the counter-revolution had broken out, and in the North, Mayence, Frankfort, and Valenciennes had fallen before the Allies. The generals were fighting, as it were, with a rope around their necks. If they lost a battle, the representative of the people denounced them as "suspect," and that was their sentence to the guillotine. Custine perished from this; and it is not surprising that such a system produced a courage of despair, and that the generals preferred death on the bayonets of the enemy. Thus it was that the Duke of York was driven back from before Dunkirk, and the Austrians were defeated at Pirmasens. On the other hand, success was

almost as perilous for a general as defeat, for the Government in Paris was ever fearful that the Revolution would be smothered by some great warrior. While the Republic was punishing every act of treason or menace by the guillotine, its enemies were actively engaged in spreading confusion at Paris. During a period of extremest misery they affected triumphal airs; the luxury of the ancient regime suddenly reappeared. The theatres became the place of rendezvous for the Royalists. At the Théâtre Français enthusiastic applause was given to a piece called "Pamela," because the scene was laid in England, while at this very time the Convention had declared Pitt the enemy of the human race. Things grew daily more gloomy; crowds collected on the Boulevards, shouting for bread, and the Convention was forced into instituting THE REIGN OF TERROR. The Committee of Public Safety was urged to root up all sedition, and to give it fresh vigour it was proposed to add Danton. But the stern Republican was now engaged on more pleasant matters. He had very recently married a girl of sixteen, Mademoiselle Louise Gely, a Royalist, whom he could only conquer by kneeling in the confessional before a refractory priest.

The Reign of Terror was accompanied by remarkable successes: the Allies were repulsed at Wattignies, and the Vendeans were driven beyond the Loire. On both these subjects Louis Blanc supplies most valuable information, derived, in the former case, from the unpublished Memoirs of Marshal Jourdan, which have been entrusted to him. Of the Vendean war, the account

now collated for the first time is still more valuable, for the English have ever obstinately regarded as heroes men who combined all the worst faults of tyrants and incendiaries. We should like to know through how many editions the Memoirs of Madame de la Roche-jacquelein passed, and inflamed that fierce hatred of the French which distinguished our fathers. There are many among us who can remember how Protestant Englishmen threw over their nervous terrors of "wooden shoes and warming-pans," and welcomed the priests who had fled from the outbreak of the Revolution. When humanity was called into question, the bonds of prejudice were broken like packthread. So far did the national feeling extend, that even innkeepers declined remuneration, and on hundreds of occasions money was thrust into the hands of the ruined and expatriated victims. At such a period the Vendean war furnished admirable political capital, and the fashion of regarding the Vendeans as ill-used men has passed into a tradition. It is too bad for Louis Blanc, then, to upset all our preconceived notions and schoolboy associations by parading harsh facts, which prove the Vendeans to have been equally culpable with the Bleus in committing unparalleled acts of atrocity.

The most pressing dangers having been removed, it was time for the Committee of Public Safety to look nearer home, and they signalized the return of confidence by wreaking their fury on a helpless woman. It is true that, after the death of Louis XVI., the watch kept over the queen relaxed in its severity; but the

proclamation issued by Dumouriez, in which he declared Louis XVII. the only legitimate sovereign of France, fatally recalled the thoughts of the nation to the Temple, the focus to which all the hopes of the conspirators turned. Even the most ultra-Royalist writers avow that repeated plots were undertaken to procure the liberation of the royal family, for the "young king" was the object of all the contra-revolutionist hopes. Reassuming the old court etiquette, his mother affected to treat him, in the Temple, with the respect due to a monarch. When seated at table, he had a chair higher than those of the rest, and provided with a cushion. This obstinacy only profoundly irritated the Republicans, and they satisfied their vengeance by separating mother and son. It was a touching scene, as the sister describes it in the *Journal de Clery*. Marie Antoinette forbade the municipals approaching the bed where the young prince lay, declaring that they should kill her before tearing her son from her. At length she was obliged to yield, through love of the rest: "My aunt and I raised my brother, for my poor mother had no strength left; and after he was dressed she took him and handed him over to the municipals, deluging him with tears." Marie Antoinette's heart was not prepared for this last blow: she was overwhelmed by it; and what increase of grief when she learned that the cobbler Simon, a violent and coarse man, was the instructor appointed for her son! As the young prince frequently went on to the tower, she spent entire hours with her face glued against a small pane, by which she hoped to see him pass.

According to M. Blanc, the Republic was well disposed, in July, 1773, to guarantee the safety of the royal family, in return for certain conditions, which Sémonville and Maret were sent to negotiate with the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the King of Naples. They were offered the liberation of the royal family if they would consent to maintain their neutrality; but the Machiavellian policy of the house of Austria opposed this. "The barbarous egotism of Marie Antoinette's own relatives was fated to be more ungenerous to her than the hatred of those conventionals whose heads would assuredly have been cut off if she had conquered."

"The two plenipotentiaries left Paris in July, and proceeded together to Venice. They had reached Novala, on the neutral territory of the Grisons, when they were arrested by the Austrians, and carried to Mantua. Maret had saved his instructions, but those of his companion having fallen into the hands of Austria, he had no doubt but that Baron Thugut, instructed on the object of their mission, would allow them to accomplish it. It was not the case: what did Austria care for the life of Marie Antoinette? Thugut had already annulled the engagements of Cobourg and Dumouriez for the re-establishment of the Monarchy; the diplomatic congress at Antwerp had decided that the Allies should obtain, through the war, indemnities for the past and guarantees for the future. This idea of dismembering France impelled Europe, and especially the house of Austria, to abandon Marie Antoinette."

The consequence of this violation of the law of nations

was increased severity towards the hapless queen. She was transferred to the Conciergerie, a step nearer the scaffold, and quitted the Temple without turning to look on her sister-in-law and daughter, for fear her firmness might abandon her. On leaving the room she struck her head against the wicket, and on being asked if she had hurt herself, replied, "Oh, no! nothing can hurt me at present." In her new prison she had the services of an under gaoler of the name of Bault, who was devoted to her cause, and did all in his power to alleviate her trials. She allowed him to brush her magnificent hair, which he performed with such respectful zeal, that she said one day, in allusion to his name, "Je veux vous appeler *bon*, parce que vous l'êtes, et que cela vaut mieux que d'être *beau*." Still it was not in his power to shield her from all the ills and humiliations which are the necessary accompaniments of fallen greatness. The lovely daughter of Marie Theresa was attired in a robe which hung in tatters. Her chemises were of very fine material, and one of them was adorned with Mechlin lace; but she had only three, one being given her every ten days. A pin's point served her to trace the state of her linen on the wall. One day, wishing to knit a pair of garters, she was forced to pull out the threads from her bed-curtains, and employ her toothpicks as knitting-needles. She wanted a quilt of English cotton, and Bault asked Fouquier Tinville for it, whose only reply was, "What darest thou ask? Thou deservest to be sent to the guillotine." On the 3rd October, Billaud Varenne sent the order to decide the fate of Marie An-

toinette without delay, and the public accuser, Fouquier Tinville, received from the Committee of Public Safety the documents relating to the trial.

"On the 8th the principal members of the Committee visited the Temple. 'We were engaged in arranging our rooms and dressing ourselves,' the daughter of Louis XVI. describes. 'My aunt did not open until we were dressed. Pache requested me to come down. . . . . I embraced my aunt, who was trembling, and went down. It was the first time I had been in the presence of men: I did not know what they wanted with me, but I recommended my soul to God. On the stairs, Chaumette proceeded to pay me some compliments, but I made no reply. On reaching my brother's side I embraced him tenderly; but they tore him from my arms, bidding me enter the next room. Chaumette told me to sit down, and he took a seat opposite to me. A municipal held the pen. . . . . Chaumette interrogated me about a thousand villanous things of which my mother and aunt were accused. . . . . There were some things which I did not understand, but what I did was so horrible that I wept with indignation.' Let us drop a veil over this odious violence done to the filial piety of a young girl and her astonished modesty. The cynical Hébert will explain only too soon the infamy attaching to such an account."

On the 14th of October, 1793, Marie Antoinette appeared before the Revolutionary Tribunal. She seated herself calmly in the easy-chair prepared for her. Although grief had prematurely aged her hair, she was

still beautiful. The crowd that filled the hall contemplated her in silence.

"Your name?" the president asked. She replied, "Marie Antoinette de Lorraine d'Autriche." "Your condition?" "I am the widow of Louis Capet, formerly King of the French." "Your age?" "Thirty-eight." Thus, as Louis Blanc remarks, she seemed to accept that name of Capet, of which no one so deeply as herself knew the insult. Fouquier Tinville pronounced the charges against the accused, whom he compared to Messalina, Brunhilda, Fredegonde, Marie de Medici. Under a solemn form were revived all the unchaste rumours which the ill-luck of the Court had caused to pass from the boudoirs into the highways and taverns: the attachments of a young, inexperienced woman, her taste for pleasure, her imprudence, her prodigality, a thousand faults, less those of her conduct than of her education and rank, were odiously transformed into crimes. But many of the charges were only too true!

The witnesses were summoned: they were such men as Bailly, Valazé, Manuel, men of another age, habitants of another world, historic figures, shadows; and M. Blanc magnificently asks, "And were not Fouquier Tinville and the triumphant Hébert, who were to disappear so rapidly, shadows also? Was not the executioner at the gate waiting to seize in turn, and indiscriminately, accusers, accused, witnesses, and judges? We shudder at such reminiscences, and believe we see before us the pallid kingdoms of Pluto." A packet was brought, and the clerk took an inventory. Singular articles on which

to convict a queen—locks of hair, needles, silk, a small pocket mirror, a female portrait, a piece of canvas on which was drawn a burning heart transfixed by an arrow. While her destiny was being weighed in the balance, Marie Antoinette's fingers played idly on the arm of her chair, as if seated at the piano. To the questions asked her she replied, either that she did not remember, or that the imputations were false, or that in political acts she was not responsible, being the wife of Louis XVI and subject to his will. She did not conceal the fact that her husband placed great confidence in her; but when the public accuser reminded her of Louis's notorious weakness, she said that she had never recognised that as his character. On certain points a pardonable weakness and a vague hope of saving her life, on other points a generous fear of compromising friends, caused her to be a traitor to the truth. She denied that she had ever written to D'Affrey, "Can we count on your Swiss? Will they act bravely?" and this document had been put in in evidence at D'Affrey's trial. She denied that she had ever signed any bill payable by the treasurer of the civil list; and Valazé's testimony contradicted her point blank. She denied that she had ever given a gold box to Toulan; and we read in the Memoirs of the Baron de Goguelat: "As disinterested as he was sensible and devoted, Toulan would accept nothing from the queen but a gold box she sometimes used; and this box was at a later date the cause of his ruin. His wife could not resist the desire of speaking about the present he had received.

"It was reserved for Hébert to make Marie Antoinette greater by trying to vilify her. He had the infamy to accuse a mother of having depraved her son, in order to enervate his body, weaken his mind, and thus secure herself the prospect of reigning in his stead. Marie Antoinette kept the silence of contempt and horror. On a juryman insisting, she said, with profound emotion, 'If I did not make any reply, it was because Nature refuses to answer such an imputation on a mother. I appeal to all mothers who may be present.' There was a rumbling of applause through the hearers. Hébert remained dumb. Robespierre, on hearing this circumstance, broke out in these terms: 'It was not enough then for the villain to have made her a Messalina, he must make her an Agrippina as well.'"

On hearing her sentence, the queen did not move a feature, and quitted the hall without uttering a word. On being led back to her prison she wrote that touching letter to her sister which has been so often published. One fear tormented her: that of not being able to confess to a refractory priest; but this consolation she obtained at last—the Abbé Maquin having succeeded in getting in. Thus, when they came to tell her a curé of Paris was inquiring whether she wished to confess, she said, in a low voice, 'A curate of Paris! there are none left!" She consented that a constitutional priest should accompany her to the scaffold, but that was all. Mercier assures us that in these terrible moments she did not lose the passions and instincts of a woman; she carefully ironed her cap, and performed her toilette with

her usual care. Lying on her coarse bed, she asked the gendarmes, who were only separated from it by a screen, "Do you believe the people will let me pass to the scaffold without tearing me in pieces?" One of them replied, "No harm will be done you, madame." But let us describe the last act of the fearful tragedy in the author's words:—

"Marie Antoinette hoped that she might be taken to punishment in a carriage, as had been the case with Louis XVI.: she shuddered at the sight of the cart that awaited her. On this cart no straw or hay: in lieu of a bench, a plank; behind, a step; in front, at the head of a lusty horse, a man with sinister visage; along the road to be traversed, soldiers. The gate opened, the queen advanced, pale, but proud. Samson followed her, holding the end of a thick string which held back the arms of the royal culprit. He took visible care to leave the cords loose. His assistant took his place in the rear; himself nearer the queen, upright, and holding his three-cornered hat in his hand. The day on which Marie Antoinette made her public entry into the capital had been an uninterrupted triumph for the young princess. 'She was ravishing in beauty and grace. The brilliant car that bore her could scarce clear a way through the masses of spectators, who could not sufficiently gaze on her, admire her, and bless her.' The Marshal de Brissac, Governor of Paris, went to meet her, and said, 'Madame, you have before you two hundred thousand lovers!' That had taken place in 1770. The cart began moving, without a cry or murmur being

heard. A white petticoat outside, a black one beneath, a species of white night-jacket, a neckerchief of white muslin, a cap with a bow of black ribbon—such was the queen's costume. Her hair was cut off round her cap; her cheeks were flushed; her eyes inflamed with blood; the lids motionless and contracted. Her countenance betrayed neither dejection nor terror. She spoke but little to the constitutional priest who accompanied her, and who was dressed as a layman. She turned an indifferent glance on the long lines of soldiers who bordered the route; but in the Rues du Roule and St. Honoré she appeared to look attentively at the tricolour flags waving about the houses. Although the actor Grammont, brandishing his sabre, and rising in his stirrups, strove to attract the fury of the crowd by coarse invectives, the people remained silent, either through indifference, pity, or modesty. Here and there cries of 'Vive la République!' were raised; and there was some clapping of hands when the fatal cart reached St. Roch, the steps of which were covered with spectators. On passing the Palais Royal, Marie Antoinette had cast a very meaning glance on this residence of an enemy; the sight of the garden of the Tuileries caused an emotion, different, but not less vivid. As she mounted the steps of the scaffold, she placed her foot accidentally on that of the executioner, and said, 'Pardon me, sir, I did not do it on purpose.' At a quarter past twelve her head fell, and was displayed to the crowd with cries of 'Long live the Republic!'"

M. Louis Blanc appears disposed to regard the death

of Marie Antoinette as a political error, for he quotes the remarks of Madame de Staël: "By immolating Marie Antoinette, you consecrate her. Your enemies have done you more injury by their death than by their life."

In the midst of wars and rumours of wars, the Revolution found time to devote to domestic matters, and invented that strange decimal division of the months about which our author indulges in rhapsodies of praise. For our own part, we confess to a non-appreciation of its merits, and prefer the old system, however absurd it may be to know the eleventh month as the ninth. More satisfactory were the arrangements made for the education of the people; and we agree with M. Blanc that there was grandeur in the declaration that France made to the world in arms against her: "Society owes to each of its members bread and education." But, after all, it was only a splendid theory; while the Constituent was passing magnificent laws to prevent bodily or mental starvation, crowds thronged the streets howling for bread, and when they grew tired of the "satia te sanguine" which the Convention shouted to the many-headed mob, asking for bread and getting blood, and took the remedy in their own hands, we fear that the educational part of the programme was sadly neglected. And such will ever be the case, however much amiable theorists—among whom we number our author—may strive against the unpalatable truth. Revolutions only appeal to the animal parts of man's nature, and, though flattered for a time by that fraternity which is offered him, he begins to feel anxious to carry out the principle

to its fullest extent, and institute a system of socialism against which the rich naturally kick. And, in such cases, the prolétaire must go to the wall. Talk as you will of the strength of the mob and the impossibility of resisting it, whenever it comes to a crisis, the rest of the nation, forgetting their quarrels, combine to crush their common foe; and such men as M. Blanc, who have devoted themselves to the cause of social humanity, are misunderstood, and pay the bitter penalty of generally misplaced philanthropy.

Not the least interesting chapter in this new volume is the one headed "Necrology," containing a list of the eminent men whose blood was shed to consolidate the new state of things. We regret that our limits will not permit us to devote any space to the account of the Girondists' death, and we can only find room for the trial and execution of Philippe Egalité, whose character our author brings out in a more favourable light than has usually been thrown on it.

"We have searched with the greatest care all the historic documents to discover how this prince deserved death, and all our researches have been in vain. Not a word or act of his which affords the slightest proof that he was betraying the Revolution or secretly aspiring to the throne. But through an unexampled fatality, calumny assailed him from all sides simultaneously; and though there are too many proofs of his dissolute manners and the disorder of his private life, his devotion to the Revolutionary cause never failed in sincerity. The treason of Dumouriez and his relations with the

Duc de Chartres caused the Convention to place all the members of the Bourbon family under arrest. Philippe Egalité was at the Palais Royal with M. de Monville, one of his intimate friends. Suddenly Merlin de Drouai came in, and announced that the prince's arrest had been decreed. At this news the prince struck his forehead, and exclaimed: 'Is it possible! After so many marks of patriotism, after so many sacrifices, what ingratitude! What do you say, Monville?' The latter was seasoning a sole, and had just squeezed out the juice of a lemon. He answered, without disturbing himself, 'They are behaving to your highness as I am to this lemon.' And he threw the two halves into the fire."

On the 6th of November, Philippe was led before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Nothing could be more absurd or miserable than the charges brought against him. He had entrusted his daughter to the care of Madame Sillery-Genlis, who had since emigrated: he had been on friendly terms with Brissot: he had dined once at Ducos's: his daughter had paid a suspicious visit to England: he had been connected, during his stay in London, with some of Pitt's creatures, &c. His replies evidenced uncommon firmness and presence of mind. The only serious charge consisted in a remark attributed to him, and which he denied, that he had said on a certain occasion to Poultier, What will you ask of me when I have become king? and the reply was, A pistol to blow out your brains; but there was not the slightest proof of this. "Why," he was asked, "do you allow

yourself to be styled *Prince?*" He replied: "I have done all that depended upon me to prevent it. I had even fixed a paper on my door, stating that those who styled me so should be fined for the benefit of the poor." All was useless. His crime, in the eyes of his judges, consisted, not in having been called prince, but his having been one. He was condemned as an accomplice in a conspiracy against the unity and indivisibility of the Republic. He heard his sentence without betraying the slightest emotion. On being led back to his room, which formed a portion of the porter's lodge, he, breakfasted jollily on oysters, and drank two-thirds of a bottle of Bordeaux. He stated he felt no bitter sentiments against the Jacobins, adding the awful remark, "Ma condamnation vient de plus haut et de plus loin." This was true enough, though perhaps not in the sense he meant. General Coustard was condemned to death at the same time as he. They were placed in a cart with three obscure individuals, one of whom, an ardent Royalist, complained bitterly of going to punishment in such bad company. The duke was dressed and powdered with great care, and a degree of pride, mingled with contempt, animated his face, which was covered with bright-red blotches. His haughty indifference gave way to a momentary emotion at the sight of the inscription, "National Property," affixed in large letters to the front of his palace. Madame de Buffon, his mistress, was in the pavilion forming the corner of the Rue des Bons Enfants, leaning out of one of the palace windows. He mounted the guillotine without the least terror, and

said to the executioner's valets, who were busy in removing his boots, "It is only lost time: you will take them off more easily when I am dead; so let us make haste."

Another chapter displaying a profundity of research and calm reasoning is that surnamed "L'Hébertisme," but our space will not allow us to do more than recommend it to our readers. One word in parting, however, with our author. Although diametrically opposed to the views which he exposes, we are bound to recognise his impartiality and care. The wonder to us is that, with such facts before him, he can still do homage to the sentiments popularly attributed to him. We should have thought that a student of revolutionary history like M. Louis Blanc, who approaches his subject as a philosopher, and, while making allowances for the temper of the people, joins with all right-minded men in deploring the excesses to which they were led, would be forced to allow the fallacy on which all such popular movements are based. In his own lifetime he has had a bitter experience of a French Revolution and Republic; and though we concede that he was actuated by the purest motives, and thus formed a wondrous contrast to the majority of the men with whom he was mixed up, he must have learned the untenability of those theories which are only harmless so long as they remain unapplied.

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE AT THE FRENCH WATERING-PLACES.

THE English are an amphibious race, and must find their way to the sea-side so soon as the dog-star rages; like salmon, they have their periodical desire to visit the mighty ocean, and return with invigorated health and fresh energies to their tasks. But this longing for salt water is not confined to our side of the Channel: the French, stimulated by the endeavours to convert Paris into a seaport, have rushed off in a body to visit what the German recitative calls "Ozean du Ungeheuer!" and watering-places have sprung up as if by magic along the pleasant coasts of Normandy and Picardy. Suppose, then, that we pay them a flying visit in company with M. Félix Mornand,* who has constituted himself the champion of French sea-bathing places, and doughtily defends them against the attacks of the rival establishments which sit at the receipt of custom within telescopic range across the Channel.

According to M. Mornand, the present thirst for salt water which affects the Parisians may be referred to the German hydropathists; but, after all, it seems to us

* La Vie des Eaux. Par Félix Mornand. Paris: L. Hachette.

that the doctors are still following the principles of Sangrado. At the beginning of the century they indulged in phlebotomy, now they adhere with equal perseverance to water, and possibly they will end by reverting to a happy combination of the two, and Gil Blas's master will be honoured in his grave as a mighty discoverer of the true art of healing. Now-a-days, all sufferers from nervous afflictions are sent off to the sea, as well as those *malades imaginaires* at whom Molière poked such fun. But we fancy they were really ill, and the unfortunate men whom Purgon martyrized in the seventeenth century were born just two hundred years too soon. They were, in point of fact, hypochondriacs suffering from the demon of indigestion; and much suffering and many *sols tournois* would that poor Argan have saved if he had been sent to the sea-side. But in the time of M. Fleurant the tonic properties of the Thermal Thetis were almost unknown. The mineral waters, such as Vichy, Bourbonne, Plombières, &c., were being visited, it is true, but a man would have been thought a maniac who plunged into the restless sea; and the feeling of the day may be best exemplified in the remark of Madame de Ludre, immortalized in the letters of Sévigné, when she said, "Ah, Zésu! ma sère De Grignan, la drôle de soze que d'être zetée toute nue dans la mer!"

It was not till the Duchesse de Berry visited Dieppe and bathed repeatedly that the sea-side became a fashionable resort of the Parisians, and until very recently Dieppe, if not the only watering-place, had no cause to

fear any dangerous rivalry. Now, however, all that is changed, and no fishing-village so small but that it allures visitors by boasting the velvety nature of its sands, and by fitting up hotels. The French are beginning to be acquainted with the sea otherwise than through the classic voyage to Havre, and in fact are suffering from an *embarras du choix*. The entire coast from Havre to Ostend is invaded each summer by a countless swarm of bathers, and in their train necessarily moves all that *valetaille* of scamps and *chevaliers d'industrie* who follow the Parisian travelling world, like vultures scenting their prey afar off.

Of the French watering-places, Dieppe, as the oldest, must have precedence. It is a cleanly, well-built town, which results from the fact of its having been bombarded and burnt by the English in 1694: the great king swore in his wrath that it should rise from its ashes more brilliant and flourishing than before. A Sieur Ventabren, a self-styled architect, was entrusted with the task; he drew some magnificent plans, but of course could not condescend to matters of detail. Hence the houses were all built without staircases, and to this day the Dieppese go up to bed by means of a ladder, or something approaching to it. Still, this was a capital exercise for the maritime population, and initiated them in the art of climbing betimes.

It seems curious that, according to our author, the authorities at Dieppe do very little for the comfort of the bathers, although the prosperity of their town depends upon them; and any one venturing to bathe

at high water will assuredly meet with the fate of Œdipus, as far as his feet are concerned. The beach is very steep, and encumbered with cordage, &c., but the municipality directs its attention solely to the proper maintenance of decency, in an uncompromising spirit which would gladden the heart of the Marquis of Westmeath. It is, indeed, curious that the English, generally so straitlaced in such matters, are so far behind their Continental neighbours in the matter of bathing toilette; but we hope this will undergo an amelioration ere long, not from impossible legislation, but through the united remonstrances of sea-side visitants. Our author appears extremely shocked at the conduct of English demoiselles at Dieppe, and says: "But that which cannot be sufficiently admired in this aquatic community is the peaceable demeanour of the chaste and timid English girls who assuredly would never venture to risk an allusion, even of the most roundabout nature, to the necessary garment, and yet pass the day seated on the beach in modestly watching the gentlemen enjoying their maritime sports."

The Pollet, once an illustrious faubourg of Dieppe, has lost much of its ancient renown, and is now only a suburban congregation of houses without character or elegance. That quaint costume which once formed the delight of masked balls and the Opéra-Comique has almost entirely disappeared: still the visitor to Dieppe has plenty of excursions to amuse him. Close at hand is Cæsar's camp, about which antiquaries have held a terrific war of paper, some asserting that it is the site of

an ancient Roman city. At no great distance, too, is the memorable field of Arques, where Henri of Navarre so nearly succumbed to the ventripotent Mayenne. A column of no great architectural pretensions has been erected on the field, to indicate the spot where the Béarnais stood during the action. Or, when wearied with historical reminiscences, the visitor can find plenty of amusement in the rustic *guinguettes*, where dancing is carried on with all the untiring energy of the Norman race.

In conclusion, we may remark that *gourmets* cannot be recommended to visit Dieppe, for hunger is the only sauce to the very Spartan food. Normandy, which supplies Paris with fat oxen, reserves none for its own consumption. We need say nothing about the wine, for Normandy is notorious for its miserable adulterations, which are passed off to confiding Cockneys under the tempting name of Bordeaux. Of course, as Dieppe is a seaport, there is no chance of procuring any fish worth eating, and the few specimens brought to market suggest a far from flattering remembrance of the Rue Mont-orgueil. Poor Gérard de Nerval boasts in one of his books of having eaten in a Norman port some fish almost as cheap as in Paris. We fancy he might have added, without any exaggeration, almost as fresh. The oysters, of which large beds are kept up along the Arques, are, however, fat and abundant, and in this respect far superior to the celebrated Rocher de Cancale, where the molluscs are hardly ever served up to strangers Our author mentions how he was disillusionized at that

classic spot. By the exercise of great diplomacy, himself and a party of friends succeeded in inducing the guardian of the oyster-beds at the Rocher to let them taste his dainties. The oysters were insipid and lean, and, worse than all, though sold by the hundred, the tally was evidently short. One of the gentlemen, striving to be facetious, inquired, "My good woman, how many oysters go to the hundred here?" "Seventy, sir," the good woman replied, mechanically; and the questioner was shut up at once.

Some few years ago, two or three ladies, tired of wounding their feet on the pebbly beach of Dieppe, and sharing with the *profanum vulgus* the stereotyped pleasures of sea-bathing, resolved to go in search of

> —— "quelque endroit écarté,
> Où de nager en paix on eût la liberté."

The feminine captain of this coasting expedition had the good fortune to disinter Trouville, a small seaport in the Calvados. It has been whispered that speculation had something to do in the matter, for the ladies possessed some sterile land at this spot, which was not of the slightest value till fashion pitched its tent there. Some *feuilletonistes* were carried over to sing the praises of the new bathing-place. The world remembered that Isabey and Mozin had exhibited for several years past charming pictures and views taken at Trouville. The battle was won: land gained a fabulous price, and the baths of Trouville were established. At present, Trouville affords the perfect εἴδωλον of a

Norman village, sunk in the slough of barbarism; but those desirous of seeing it under that aspect must make haste, for the trowel and civilization make rapid progress. The sands are soft as ermine, and this is the incontestable superiority which Trouville has over Dieppe. There is no bathing establishment, but merely a few tents of striped canvas, while the bathing-men carry old persons pick-a-back into the sea. There is a grand confusion of the sexes, and a young father may frequently be seen giving a swimming lesson to his wife and daughters. Bachelors, however, are kept at a respectful distance, less through fear of danger, we fancy (for a woman in a bathing-dress is protected from the *malocchio*), than to invite them to cherish and desire the legitimate knot of wedlock. Nor is there any gallery or terrace on the beach from which to contemplate these aquatic evolutions, and hence young English visitors to Trouville are to be pitied: their occupation is completely gone. As for amusements, they need not be expected in this out-of-the-way spot: a strolling company of poor players now and then exhibits in a barn, or some stray vocalist gets up a lugubrious concert. But the great charm of Trouville is the perfect isolation of society: every visitor converts himself for the nonce into a misanthrope. The spirit of caste reigns tyrannically at Trouville: there are a Faubourg St. Germain and a Faubourg St. Honoré. The gentlemen amuse themselves by cheapening fish at the port; the English by going to see their meat weighed—a business which they never neglect in any place, our author maliciously adds

—while the ladies dress themselves magnificently thrice a day. As a specimen of the refined barbarism Trouville has attained, we may mention that the only pastrycook is at the same time a master butcher. On one table the legs of mutton are exhibited, on another tartlets. There are a few venerable coaches in the village for excursions on *terra firma*, the principal of these being to the Châlet, a charming spot belonging to M. Ulrich Guttinguer, a distinguished littérateur. Other excursions may be made to the Château de Beaumont and the valley of Hennequeville, which offer some magnificent views.

The hotel-keepers of Normandy have a proverbial well-merited renown for covetousness, and we may here quote a truly sublime remark referring to one at Trouville. A Legitimist gentleman, who bears a name too well known in the annals of the Restoration, established himself without suspicion at the house of this Rolando among publicans. At the end of a week an enormous bill was handed to him amounting to three louis a day, and he naturally refused to pay. It was referred to an arbiter, necessarily a Trouvillian; but even he was startled at the exorbitant charge, and greatly reproached his countryman. "Spare such people as those!" replied the host, "nonsense; they have done too much injury to France!" "You are right," said the arbiter, conquered by such a display of liberalism; and he condemned M. de P. to pay the amount.

The annual stay of the ex-royal family at Eu, the visits of Queen Victoria, and the consecration of the

entente cordiale beneath the umbrageous foliage of the park surrounding the ancient residence of the Guises, gained Tréport a high reputation as a summer bathing-place. It is, however, only a fishing-village, like Trouville, although it calls itself a town, and boasts of having been the *portus ulterior* of which mention is made in Cæsar. A portion of the expedition against King Harold probably sailed from Tréport; and the Normans, when converted into Englishmen, paid frequent visits to it, though generally with a torch in their hands. Tréport was fired four times by its former citizens, not only in the middle ages, but as far down as the reign of Francis I., as is attested by the following quatrain extracted from the poetic gazette of some contemporary Loret:—

"Par un ribaud et faute de support,
L'an mil cinq cent quarante-cinq compris,
Le second jour de Septembre, fut pris
Et mis à feu des Anglais le Tréport."

But such repeated fires have not embellished Tréport, have and a single bombardment, like that of Dieppe, would been of much greater service to the town. It is a mass of ugly buildings congregated on a tall cliff, or scattered over the escarped hill on which the church is built. At a distance, Tréport is very picturesque, but it is entirely the distance that lends enchantment to the view; on closer inspection, Tréport is far from satisfactory. The beach is more unpleasant than that at Dieppe, and the municipality do not pay the slightest attention to clearing away the rubbish brought in with the tide.

This seems to be the prevalent fault of French watering-places, and we feel rather surprised at it, for we always understood, when we grumbled about the carelessness in such matters at home, that they managed such things better in France. During the last reign a palace was built here for the young Comte de Paris, which he visited annually, but at present it is neglected; the bathing-establishment is confined to some twenty tents in very bad condition, and here and there a plank is laid down for the bather to reach the sea without lacerating his feet. The principal object worth visiting is the church, which is built in a very curious fashion, and is highly picturesque. There is no theatre or dancing-establishment, and persons desirous of amusement go to Eu and its magnificent forest. A fine road, though very sandy, and exposed to the fierce rays of the sun, connects the two villages, and omnibuses run hourly. Eu, situated in a valley on the banks of the Bresle, is an ugly and irregularly built place, which attained a factitious renown during the past reign by the presence of a luxurious court. The château, which was at that day the fortune of Eu, stands in the heart of the town, and is only separated from it by a wall. It was built by Duc Henri de Guise (le Balafré) in 1578. It is a very picturesque edifice, and the restorations have been effected with so much taste that it is difficult to distinguish the old part from the new. Eu, like the majority of princely residences, has undergone strange and numerous vicissitudes. Here it was that the Duchesse de Guise, after the assassination at Blois, retired to deplore her husband

—perhaps her own weakness; and by one of those sudden accesses of piety, so peculiar to the tumultuous heroines of that gallant period, like a modern Artemisia, she raised a superb mausoleum to the man who had crushed her wrist in his iron gauntlet, and forced her to be present at the murder of the handsome Saint-Mégrin. Here, too, the firm and tender Amazon of the Fronde, the conqueror of Orleans in petticoats and *cornette*, the intrepid artillerist of the Faubourg St. Antoine, Mademoiselle d'Eu, de Dombes, and de Montpensier, the great Mademoiselle, in short, who became owner of the château on the death of the last Guise, spent the long exile to which she was condemned for so strenuously refusing the hand of a king. Here, too, after all the disgrace incurred through her love of that fortuneless and insignificant younger son, she saw once more, and adored more than ever, that strange Péguilhem, that pallid husband of princesses, in whom, then as ever, she found, in return for so many sacrifices, the most ungrateful, cold, and egotistical of men. In 1793 the Château d'Eu was seized, the furniture sold, and the pictures sent to Dieppe. The nation decreed that it should be converted into a military hospital, but eventually presented it to the senators of Rouen. General Rampon took possession of it during the Empire, and the spurred boots of the soldier of fortune scratched the inlaid flooring over which the gaily-dressed followers of the great houses of Bourbon and Lorraine had once moved in such stately fashion. The Emperor, in his turn, took a fancy to the château, and attached it to the domains of the Crown.

In 1814 the château was restored to the Orleans family. In 1821 the ex-king of the French returned to it for the first time. He had been educated at the Château de Lamotte, about two leagues from this residence. Hence, one of his first commands was to preserve the old château at any price; and from that period to the end of his reign he displayed a marked predilection for this historic abode.

The chief attraction of visitors to the Château d'Eu used to be the collection of pictures (dispersed in consequence of the decree of the 13th January, 1852, relating to the Orleans property) commenced by the great Mademoiselle, who transferred here her paintings from the Château de Choisy. The pictures were arranged without any regard to chronology, and formed a strange pell-mell, representing a perfect image of life, or rather of death. Here you could see La Fayette elbowing the Emperor; Louis XI., Gabrielle d'Estrées; Charles the Bold, that other Duke of Burgundy who had Fenélon as his preceptor; the Duchesse de Berri (daughter of the Regent) minced next to Père la Chaise; and the full-length portrait of the Duc de Nemours at the attack on Constantineh had as pendants, on the right, the Duke of Marlborough, and, on the left, Prince Eugène. As for the famous Victoria Gallery, the frames destined for the members of the two royal families, including the king-consort, gaped in vain. It was the same with the large pictures; only a few episodic sketches were finished relating to the memorable visit, the breakfast under the trees, the drives in the

char-à-bancs, the disembarkation of the Queen, and other inspirations of the same force. But the gems of the gallery were the two celebrated pictures known as the "Déjeûner aux Huîtres," and the "Déjeûner au Jambon," curious as evidences of the complete forgetfulness of their dignity as men and kings which rulers exhibited in the glorious times of furbelows and laces.

The internal decoration of the château is rich, but far from magnificent. Each member of the royal family had a complete suite of rooms, and there was room for friends: Guizot, Marshal Soult, Lord Aberdeen, and the principal members of the defunct Cabinets of England and France have found lodgings there. The conqueror of Nézib also received hospitality there, and occupied the room of the conqueror of Toulouse (?). What would Henri le Balafré have said could he have foreseen that not merely a Huguenot but an infidel should sleep the sleep of the just beneath his roof? The sleeping-apartment occupied by the king and queen was not distinguished from the others by an extra ornamentation. We must do Louis Philippe the justice of saying, that personally he displayed almost a republican contempt for luxury. His study at Eu deserves especial mention. On the chimney was a pendule of the *hôtel garni* type; before the window a walnut-wood writing-table, stained with ink, and a leather chair; the whole not worth two pounds at a sale. But the king was inexorable; he was implored to have his furniture altered—it was even carried off clandestinely—but all was of no avail. His majesty, in this matter, played the absolute monarch.

Another thing worthy of a visit at Eu is the royal kitchen, most eminently political and international. You could hardly believe there were so many pots and pans in the world as may be seen here. The hierarchy of flunkeyism was strictly kept up here; there were dining-rooms for each class of livery—one for the footmen, another for the stables, a third for the ladies'-maids, a fourth for the "kitchen," in the strict sense of the term, each served according to rank, for the world of *aiguillettes* possesses its distinctions, delicacies, and castes.

Before quitting Eu we are bound to say that the inhabitants are exceptions from the rest of the Normans; and the hotel-keeper of the Cygne Blanc is the only one in Normandy in whom our author found two qualities rarely coupled—those of the aubergiste and the honest man. In fact, when you are at Eu, you can scarcely believe you are in Normandy, so refreshing is the relief from being plundered on all sides.

Of Havre we need to say but little, as the bathing world is swallowed up in the number of commercial men. As a statistical fact, we may mention, however, that it is the dearest town in France, and the living generally very bad. But at an hour's distance is a charming new bathing-place lately sprung up, known by the name of Cabourg Dives, and historically remarkable as the spot whence William the Conqueror set sail for England. The sands are magnificent, and speculators have already commenced building, and Cabourg is destined to attain a great popularity, for man is fond of

change—the earth revolves—the Channel has its ebb and flow. Surely, then, we may say:—

"Il nous faut du nouveau, n'en fût-il plus au monde;"

and we fancy it will be found at Cabourg.

Boulogne, our next halting-place, has become a thoroughly English colony, and the few Frenchmen left in the town are employed in waiting on, feeding, lodging, carrying, driving, warming, shaving, hair-cutting, dressing MM. les Anglais. All the prospectuses, signs, provocations, flatteries, are exclusively addressed to them. An English paper is published at Boulogne. The *Guides* to the environs are in the same language. French and English money is received indifferently, or rather a marked preference is given to English sovereigns and shillings over French francs and louis. The money-changers almost decline to receive French gold at par. The landlord of the hotel where our author put up addressed him in English: then perceiving his mistake, said, "Monsieur est étranger;" and assumed what was once his mother-tongue. When he entered a café he was offered soda-water, ginger-beer, and porter. At dinner, roast beef, sherry, ale, and all the puddings of the three kingdoms were sure to make their appearance. All the cabarets—and there are plenty of them in the town—bear signs as follow: Prince of Wales, Queen Victoria, Castle of Edinburgh Tavern. At the gates of Boulogne, on the road to Calais, and a couple of steps from the column, is an estaminet dedicated to Marlborough. Our author adds, with French

indignation, "Why not to Wellington?—that will come: let the manes of his grace be patient for a little while, and Waterloo will have its hero like Ramilies, Malplaquet, and without doubt Trafalgar too."

It is quite certain, then, that if ever the *entente cordiale* were to be broken up, one town in France would remain faithful to it, for Boulogne would be ruined by a war with England. Still, it must be allowed that Boulogne owes its increasing development to the invasion of the English. The streets and shops are equal to any to be found in the most elegant parts of Paris. The upper town is precisely in the same state as when it was besieged by Henry VIII., in 1544, as may be seen by an old engraving kept in the town museum. Near one of the gates of the town is a fountain, bearing a colossal bust of Henri II., who is held in great esteem by the citizens, for the following valid reason: When Henry VIII. took possession of the town, he said he would only give it up for a very large sum, rightly considering it as one of the keys of France. At length it was agreed that Henry should receive two million gold crowns, and give up possession on St. Michael's day, 1554. This treaty was signed at Ardres in 1546; but, in the interval, Henry VIII. and Francis I. both died, and Henry II. of France, finding that his illustrious father had been too liberal in many matters, and more especially in the ransom of Boulogne, refused to ratify the treaty. He pretended to arm, and eventually gained possession of Boulogne at the enormous discount of sixteen hundred thousand crowns. But the English,

naturally an energetic race, and persevering in their designs, did not hold themselves beaten. After the lapse of three centuries they have returned to the charge, and recaptured the town much more surely than Henry VIII. had ever accomplished. It is entirely their own at present.

The Museum of Boulogne is worth visiting by the stranger: it contains a curious collection of birds, a cabinet of medals, and a gallery of Asiatic arms and idols. Here, too, are preserved the car, speaking-trumpet, and instruments of the luckless Pilâtre du Rosier and his companion, picked up after the destruction of his balloon and his awful death on the 15th of June, 1785. An obelisk has been erected in the warren at Wimereux, close to the spot where he fell, bearing an inscription commemorative of the tragic event. At Wimereux the first Emperor formed an immense port for the shelter of the flotilla intended to act against England. It is now rapidly silting up, and will soon disappear entirely. Between Wimereux and Boulogne is the memorable column erected to the glory of the Emperor by the army and navy. It was completed by the Restoration, in remembrance—*risum teneatis*—of the Charter and the happy return of Louis-le-Désiré. Still, the column will ever be a memorial of the foundation of the Legion of Honour, for the first distribution of crosses by the hand of the Emperor took place a few paces beyond, in the plain of Terlinchton.

"If my heart is taken out after my death," said Mary Tudor, with an expiring sigh, "the word CALAIS will

be found engraved on it." The traveller would certainly have some difficulty in appreciating this romantic idea, for Calais is truly a dreary spot at present. There seems to linger a curse over the place, and its decadence, though gradual, is certain. Long streets, in which the grass is growing; a few silent passers-by; old, inanimate houses, which no longer retain their Gothic physiognomy; a solitary promenade, planted with trees, on the ramparts, where the inhabitants go at times to enjoy the fresh air, like prisoners, in the feudal ages, on the platform of a turret; no commercial activity in the port, and hardly any monuments—such is the Calais of to-day. The sea even seems to have joined in the conspiracy against the town, for it is slowly retiring. The bathing, however, is excellent, and the sands form a gentle slope, which prevents any danger, as is too often the case at Boulogne. Our author, in a word, on visiting Calais, might have quoted (always supposing he was acquainted with them) the lines in the "Rejected Addresses:"—

> "It did not seem inhabited,
> But some vast city of the dead,
> All was so hushed and still!"

Dunkirk, which town the French, with their amiable pertinacity, insist on calling l'Eglise des Dunes, is a new and regularly built town, divided into two distinct parts: the one which is seen, new, symmetrical, and carefully whitewashed; the other invisible and subterraneous, whose roofs are on a level with the pavement, and whose shutters open on the *trottoir*. Beneath each house is a

profound cellar, not employed to hold casks and bottles, like an ordinary cellar, but a numerous population. It is possible that the repeated bombardments with which the English indulged Dunkirk, led the inhabitants to live in this species of casemates, and the custom has grown with their growth. You descend into the cellars, not through the interior of the houses, but through trap-doors let into the pavement, and closed tightly at night-fall, or when the inhabitants are absent from home. In no other way can light and air penetrate into these vaults. But it must not be supposed that the poorer classes alone live in this way; on the contrary, the cellars are furnished with considerable elegance, and are even let out to visitors in the summer months. Nothing is more common than to see a notice of the "lower part of a house to let;" but a visitor would hardly anticipate that he would be compelled to go so very low.

The sea is gradually retiring from Dunkirk, and the immense piers run out a most hyperbolical distance to keep pace with its withdrawal. It is to be hoped that science will invent some method to prevent Dunkirk sharing the fate of Aiguesmortes and Harfleur. This circumstance, as well as the out-of-the-way situation of Dunkirk, has hitherto prevented it becoming a fashionable watering-place. People do not like having to travel an interminable distance in a bathing-machine, on the risk of finding only a teacupful of water to represent the ocean. But the principal charm to visitors is the celebration of those quaint old *fêtes* which form the delight of the population of Flanders, and which

are held on every available occasion. The hero of the festivity is the Dunkirk Reuse (corrupted from the German Riese—Giant), who is kept when off duty in the clock tower of the church, whence he can only emerge holding his head in his hand like Saint Denis. He is joined by Gayant and his family from Douay, who have been brought thence in a special train overnight. We may mention here that the Gayant is a chevalier whose traditional bravery saved Douay on several occasions from the most imminent danger. The Reuse was a grand seigneur of Flanders, who excavated the port of Dunkirk. They are carried officially about on every occasion, and no *fête* can be held at Douay without Gayant and his wife, or at Dunkirk without the Reuse. These customs have evidently been engrafted on the Flemings by their Spanish conquerors. Gayant is simply a derivation of the Spanish Jayan, meaning giant. At the present day, these exhibitions of gigantic liberators are common in the Balearic Islands, and particularly in the provinces forming the old kingdom of Aragon.

Ostend, the neighbour and rival of Dunkirk in a sea-bathing point of view, is a fortress, possessing in its streets all that rectangularity which is the despair of artists. There is not a trace left of the town which stood the memorable three years' siege, during which Spain and the United Provinces expended eighty thousand men. What is to be seen now is bran new: not an edifice is to be found of a greater antiquity than a hundred years. As a general rule, regular towns are not particularly gay (witness Mannheim and Carlsruhe),

and Ostend does not break through that rule. The surrounding scenery is flat and monotonous to a degree, and we doubt whether a dozen trees could be found within a circumference of five miles. In short, Ostend resembles anything rather than a place of amusement, and yet its prosperity as a watering-place augments every year, proportionately with its decrease as a commercial port and manufacturing town. It owes its reputation to its admirable sands, to the privilege of being almost the only port of a pocket kingdom, and the line of railway bringing to it visitors from every part of Germany.

The dyke is the great meeting-place of bathers, for as the surrounding country offers no attractions, visitors are forced to live by the sea-side. Life at Ostend is exactly like that on board ship, and though Frenchmen are apt to grow tired of it in a very short time, your stolid Germans and Flemings are delighted with their *dolce far niente*, and assume a nautical swagger as they pace their quarter-deck, in the shape of a long and extremely ugly pier jutting out into the sea. There is no doubt of Ostend being a healthy spot, for every face you notice there is blooming, and shows that the fresh sea breezes force their way through or over the confining ramparts. The principal place of amusement is the Casino, situated in the Hôtel de Ville, where balls are held during the season, and strangers are allowed to enter gratis.

One of the principal curiosities at Ostend is the oyster-bed, which is known creditably through the whole *gourmet* world of civilized Europe. Strange to say, the coast does not produce a single oyster. They are

procured from England, and when they arrive at Ostend are lean and poor, just as if they were suffering from the national spleen. After a short residence in the Ostend bed, they recover their health, appetite, and good looks. In Paris, folk run mad after small oysters, the size, in the eyes of false gastronomers, constituting three-fourths of their merit. As they are sold by weight, the agents who supply Véfour and the Café Anglais beg the owners to send them small oysters, so that the number which can be extracted from a barrel may be increased. The Ostend people are delighted to accede to this request, for it enables them to get rid of their small fry to their own profit, and keep the better oysters for more enlightened consumers.

Altogether, Ostend may be recommended to those persons who go to the sea-side merely for the sake of the sea, and have no wish for other amusement than fishing and smoking. But if they like variety, we hardly think Ostend will satisfy them. We can speak from experience, and consider it the dullest hole to which ever a poor Englishman was condemned to undergo penance and drink that inexorable bière de Louvain. We think, on the whole, that Boulogne is decidedly preferable.

From Ostend to Biarritz is a wondrous change—from the stolid phlegm of the beer-imbibing and beer-thinking Flemings to the vivacious, merry Gascons, who are honoured each year by the présence of their emperor among them. This happy spot, nearly in the same latitude as the Mediterranean, has the added charm of tide and billows to attract the visitor. Biarritz is

situated about six miles from Bayonne, and built on rocks which rise sheer from the sea to the height of 150 feet. The winding of the coast at this point produces a very rough sea at times, which, driven by the north and westerly winds, dashes with a prodigious noise against the cliffs; but this has the advantage of raising a gentle breeze, which refreshes this unwooded and barren coast. This savage contest between the waves and the cliffs has produced numberless excavations in the rocks, the largest of which, representing a semicircle of thirty-six to forty feet in diameter, and with a height of some twenty feet, has received the traditional name of the "Chamber of Love." It is the pitiful adventure of the shepherd Oura and the shepherdess Edera surprised by the rising tide in this grotto, where they forgot the moments, which procured this terrible cavern its erotic title. The sea has worn away the rock and produced a series of cavities here, which are called the Baths of Love. The caverns and baths present ample danger to those who dare affront the furies of this terrible Gascon gulf; and several young and lovely swimmers have been carried out to sea by the ebb-tide, in spite of the devotion of the most daring bathers. People still visit the Baths of Love, dauntless of the perils incurred; but it is more prudent to shun them, and adhere to the commodious and safe beach of the old port, where a number of boats constantly ply to look after the swimmers who venture too far out, or are assailed by dizziness. Here all the world bathes pell-mell, and it used to be most amusing to see the townsfolk flock in on certain days of

the week from Bayonne in *cacolets*, or mules carrying pack-saddles, with double compartments, on each side of which the visitor and the guide take their places, the equilibrium being preserved by adding weight to the lighter person. These were the *fiacres* of Bayonne, which stood for hire at the corner of the principal streets and squares; and we may as well say that the conductors of these *cacolets* were generally young and pretty Basque women, which added considerably to the charm of these pleasant vehicles.

In the sides of the rock looking down on the old port, spacious and convenient routes have been cut, whence the road commands the town, the beach, the sea, and the Doric colonnade of the vast warm-bathing establishment. Following the path to the right, you arrive by an insensible acclivity upon the Atalaya, whence the eye surveys an immense panorama. On one side are the lighthouse, surmounting the point of St. Martin of Biarritz; the mouth of the Adour and flotillas of chasse-marées and merchantmen steering towards the ocean; the coast of the Marenein, which is confounded with the ocean upon the horizon: on the other side, to the left, the dunes of Bedart, the fine village of Guéthary, whose white houses are arranged in an amphitheatrical form; Soroa, and its crenellated tower; Fontarabia, and the entire Spanish coast. At your feet are the waves breaking against the rocks and falling back in cascades, and before you the mighty Atlantic. On the side opposite the Atalaya extends a superb bed of sand, known as the Mill Coast; it is the meeting place of all the boldest

swimmers. Here dangerous contests take place at times against the rampant waves; but all possible precautions are taken to ensure safety, and there are several large basins here where inexperienced persons in the art of swimming can take a plunge without any risk.

During the season, Biarritz is of course a cosmopolitan congress of celebrities of every description, and the fusion of French and Spanish nationalities is very peculiar. Without mentioning the *merveilleux* of the adjoining departments, and the Parisians, who are still rather a rarity, we find here the Béarnais, with his sharp and brilliant eye, his expressive and intellectual face; the Basque of Quipuzcoa, active, careless, and true descendant of those valiant Cantabrians who waged so long a desperate warfare against the Roman eagle; the Catalan and Navarrese women, whom we will not attempt to describe, but refer our readers to "L'Andalouse" of M. de Musset; and finally, among this swarm of blonde and brunette beauties, with blue or black eyes, milk-white or bistre complexion, a simple grisette, the young girl of Bayonne, holds her ground honourably, and justifies the renown of her race, among whom an ugly woman is a phenomenon, in a country where grace and natural elegance are the common type. The public rooms occupy the first floor of an hotel recently built on the principal square. Newspapers, pamphlets, publications of all sorts, music and instruments, are always to be found there. Although the coast of Biarritz is so arid—a fact easily explained by its geological composition—it does not appear that the

parching west wind is an insurmountable object to cultivation, as has generally been assumed. An artist, a pupil of Girodet's, M. Feillet, who has settled at Bayonne, has hit upon the fortunate idea of combating and conquering prejudice or nature. He has built on the summit of the Côte du Moulin a hermitage, which, owing to his attention, is already surrounded by brilliant vegetation, and will eventually become a great attraction to the visitors at Biarritz.

All along this coast legends swarm, and our readers will probably be thankful to us for omitting them here. A stock of legends is kept here to satisfy the popular demand, like relics of the "Grande Armée" at Waterloo. They are particularly careful to tell you the most appalling tales when the sea is beginning to swell and the storm broods over the coast: the *mise en scène* is then complete. So, whenever you visit the Atalaya, be cautious about entering into conversation with any old sailor. There is a cross on that terrible precipice we fancy planted there at the manufacture of the tenth legend relating to the spot. If you go to Biarritz, then, be on your guard against sailors and crosses; this is the advice given you by a veteran bather, who has already undergone any quantity of legends while trying the relative merits of the Mediterranean, the German Ocean, the Channel, and a portion of the Atlantic.

CHAPTER V.

A FRENCHMAN IN KENTUCKY.*

HAVE any of our readers had the felicity of forming the acquaintance of an Ingot—we do not mean a solid lump of gold, worth so much per ounce troy, according to the market agio, but a real living Ingot—in other words, a French adventurer, sent out to California at Government expense, from the proceeds of the renowned Ingot Lottery? As the question appears to be a very moot one we think we cannot run any risk in introducing them on paper to a certain M. Acacia, ex-sergeant of the Chasseurs de Vincennes, but at present writing, citizen of the United States, carpenter, gunpowder manufacturer, and editor of the *Semi-Weekly Messenger*, at Oaksburg, Hamilton county, Kentucky. His adventures in the land of his adoption are certainly curious, and we cannot do better than give a sketch of them, to show how a Frenchman fares in America.

In July, 1856, Acacia was lounging along the streets of Louisville when he heard half a dozen shots fired. Thinking, at first, it was only a couple of Kentuckians having a peaceable explanation, he did not disturb him-

* Scènes de la Vie des États-Unis. Par Alfred Assolant. Paris: Hachette et Cie.

self; but on approaching the scene of action he found one man surrounded by half a dozen rowdies. A few blows from the Frenchman's nervous arm, and the ruffians fled. Acacia then introduced himself to the stranger, who proved to be the Rev. John Lewis, of England, come out with a mission to put down slavery. Acacia was much delighted at the meeting, for, among other speculations, he had built a chapel, which he let out to the various congregations in turn. But, although the chapel was painted red, white, and blue, with any quantity of stars in the last field to represent the American banner, while the Frenchman's head clerk played the cornet-à-piston, as accompaniment to the hymns, and the opposition chapel had only a flageolet, the chapel did not draw as it should do. The ladies were growing tired of the local preachers, and wanted fresh excitement. Mr. Lewis, who had been in India, and various parts of the unknown world, was a *bonne bouche* for Acacia, and he soon made him a handsome offer to accompany him home and enlighten the town as to the mysteries of Swedenborgianism, the peculiar doctrine he professed.

On arriving at Oaksburg, Mr. Lewis was introduced to Miss Julia Alvarez, Acacia's partner, and, pious man though he was, became enamoured of her at first sight. The evidences of his passion Acacia accepted rather gladly, for, with the fickleness of a Frenchman, he had recently lost his heart to a lovely young American girl, Miss Lucy Anderson, and was somewhat in doubt how to dissolve partnership with Julia. But his first business

was to kick out his overseer, one Appleton, who had dared to insult his young mistress. The overseer departed, vowing vengeance, while Acacia and Lewis proceeded to pay a visit to the Andersons, much to Julia's disquietude. Lucy was herself rather smitten with the Frenchman, and would have him, if she could only appease her mind as to the connexion between him and Julia; but her sister Deborah, at this period twenty-nine years of age, a religionist and an M.D. to boot, regarded him as a son of Belial.

To this respectable lady Mr. Lewis was entrusted to have his arm cured, and in the conversation he held with Jeremiah Anderson, he learned the antecedents of Acacia. Jeremiah was at St. Francisco, his store having been just burned down in one of the enormous fires, when an emigrant ship came into port. The first man to land was Acacia, dressed in a worn-out uniform, and armed with a hatchet, saw, and hammer. Going along the quay he picked up a nail, and before long came up to a Yankee, who was already building up his house again amid the smoking ruins. To him Acacia offered his carpentering services, but the Yankee only wanted nails. Acacia offered him the one he had picked up for the modest sum of a dollar. After some grumbling the Yankee concluded the bargain, and Acacia went back to the ship and bought up the carpenter's store of nails for two dollars, one down, the other to be paid at night. This speculation brought him three hundred dollars, and with this money he went round to all the vessels in port, and bought up every nail to be had. Before

nightfall he was the richer by two thousand dollars. Then he made Jeremiah's acquaintance at an eating-house, and struck up a partnership with him. His next step was to go and offer forty thousand dollars for the ship he had come out in, which was useless to the captain as the crew had bolted to the diggings. This speculation brought in one hundred thousand dollars, and by the end of the year the partners were worth millions. But Acacia tempted fortune too long: he would not be satisfied till he had become the Californian Rothschild, and his ambition took a wrong turn. They lost and lost until the capital was reduced to one hundred thousand dollars, and then they thought it time to cut the concern.

On reaching New Orleans, Acacia saw Miss Julia Alvarez put up for sale. As she was a very lovely girl, the Frenchman's chivalry rose to fever heat, and he boldly offered ten thousand dollars for her. So soon as she was knocked down to him he gave her her liberty, and for once virtue did not go unrewarded. As Julia's late master had left no will, the property went to the heir-at-law, Mr. Craig, but a lawyer turned up with a will, which he sold Acacia for twenty thousand dollars, and by it Julia proved to be sole legatee. The happy couple went into partnership, as we have already said, at Oaksburg, and had made an enormous fortune, their only enemy being the aforesaid Mr. Craig, who had set up in opposition to them, and was bent on ruining them out of revenge. In his paper Acacia was decidedly original. Although marvellously ignorant of the mother

tongue, he wrote all the leaders himself, for, as he observed, English is only French badly pronounced. His great support was that he opened one column to poetry, and this brought him in any quantity of subscribers, for it is estimated that there are in Kentucky at least fifteen hundred damsels who, innocent of the art of making a pie, devote their superabundant energy to verse. As to his editorial talent, the following announcement, which met the astonished gaze of Mr. Lewis the very night of his arrival, will be the best evidence :—

"Great News!
Reform of all Christian Sects ! !
The Human Race introduced to the World of Spirits.
Clear and distinct View of the other World according
To the System of Swedenborg ! ! !
Sermon of Dr. John Lewis, Missionary to the East
India Company at Benares ! ! ! !
Progress of Christianity in the Thibetan Mountains.
Marvellous Account of the Flight of Dr. John Lewis
Pursued by Four Hundred Mongol Horsemen ! ! ! ! !
In the Dawalagiri Gorges ! ! ! ! ! !
Honey and Vinegar, or the Saint coming to the
Assistance of his Servant ! ! ! ! ! ! !

"We have the satisfaction of announcing to the public some news which will fill all true Christians with joy. The Rev. Dr. John Lewis has just arrived at Oaksburg.

"This illustrious missionary, who by his extraordinary travels has surpassed the Apostles Peter and Paul, consents at our entreaty to deliver a lecture at Acacia

Hall on Sunday s'ennight. A special agreement ensures the special delivery of his sermons to our eminent fellow-citizen M. Acacia.

"We have received the following letter from our own London correspondent:—

"'Our great Indian apostle, the Rev. John Lewis, will start to-morrow for the United States. This holy missionary, to whom her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria has deigned so repeatedly to offer the bishopric of Calcutta, before recommencing in India and the mountains of Thibet the life of danger and fatigue to which he is accustomed, has desired to visit that new continent to which the Anglo-Saxon race has carried the Gospel. He wishes to see that land of heroes and free men, which, in the short space of three-quarters of a century, has supplied to humanity more great orators, great warriors, illustrious legislators, inventors, and benefactors, than all the collected peoples of the universe. It is believed that the learned doctor will employ the short leisure allowed him by the interruption of his apostolic labours, in writing the history of his life and the terrific adventures by which it has pleased Providence to try his courage. We have had the happiness of hearing the recital of his flight from the gorges of the Dawalagiri. No more moving tale can be conceived than that of this gentleman's flight at full gallop over mountains, rivers, and precipices, every moment on the point of being captured by four hundred Mongolian horsemen, sent to cut off his head, and at length finding shelter in a deep grotto, like those of the pious

hermits in the 'Thebaïd.' In vain should we try to depict the astonishment of these barbarians, when, after searching the whole country, they found themselves forced to return without him to the court of the Emperor of Thibet, the savage fury of this pitiless prince, who had them decapitated on the spot, and the fearful sight of their four hundred heads exposed on the walls of his capital. These are things which must be heard from the doctor's own lips. The missionary, John Lewis, is still quite young; he is scarcely thirty years of age. He is tall, well-built, possesses a handsome face and most distinguished manners. He is a perfect gentleman. The agreeable and thoroughly noble expression of his countenance has produced the greatest effect upon the ladies who have had the pleasure to hear him. It is confidently asserted that the elder daughter of the Grand Lama fell in love with him, and that she secretly warned him to quit the country, if he did not wish to be massacred. Others state that he owed his escape more especially to the constant communication he maintains with the spirits. His voice is sweet and sonorous, his glance gentle and penetrating. He is a bachelor.'

"We are informed that M. Acacia, being anxious to augment the solemnity of this ceremony, has brought a harmonium with him from Louisville, and that a young lady of Oaksburg, Miss Lucy Anderson, as remarkable for her rare musical acquirements as for her graces and piety, has promised to inaugurate this splendid instrument, which is a masterpiece of Parisian production.

"The price of admission, for this occasion only, will be a dollar each."

The next day produced a counterblast from Mr. Craig's paper, the *Herald of Freedom.* Among other compliments, he wrote that a friend of his, who had visited Newgate, recognised Lewis as having been confined in that prison for bigamy. In conclusion, the announcement stated that this Lewis was only a worthy comrade of that atheist who lent his church to all religions without believing in any one, and who was the friend of the Papists, Irish, and negroes. Of a verity it must be a pleasant thing to edit a paper in Kentucky, and one must have an elephant's hide not to be stung by such missiles. But this was not all. Mr. Craig determined on setting up an opposition in Mr. Toby Benton, a grocer, who, not having made a fortune, sought shelter in the ministry against the tempests of the world and the wholesale grocers. Tired of mixing, to no purpose, ochre with his ground coffee, he had become a preacher. By turns Moravian, Anglican, or Presbyterian, according to the people with whom he had to deal, he had at last met with Craig, and become Presbyterian. Full of religious zeal, Mr. Benton wrote tracts, which had a ready sale in the railway cars, among other less edifying productions, such as "The Art of Paying Court to Ladies." His tracts were commendable through the austerity of their precepts. He compared the Catholics to the herd of swine drowned in the Lake of Genesareth, and the other dissenters to the Moabites and Amorites. His co-religionists were the

people of Israel, and himself, at one time, Moses governing the children of Jacob, at another, with more modesty, the pillar of fire guiding the tribes in the desert. What with his tracts, the subscriptions of the faithful, and a speculation in hams, which he sent to the New Orleans market, Mr. Benton enjoyed a comfortable income of three thousand dollars.

But Acacia was not merely satisfied with having a distinguished preacher: he wished to secure his authority in the town by having a mayor elected entirely devoted to him, for Craig was already plotting to be elected. For this purpose Acacia proposed to his friend Jeremiah to be put in nomination, but that gentleman prudently declined the honour. As he justly said, so soon as he was elected mayor, people would cry from the roof-tops that he was enriching himself at the expense of the public, and that he employed the town funds to repair his own house and the road leading to it. If he had lamp-posts put up, it would be said he was a shareholder in the gas company; if he macadamized the town, he had some personal interest in it; if he sent policemen to pick up the drunkards in the street, they would exclaim against his tyranny and his prætorians at a dollar per head; if he spoke in public, he would be hissed, or if he were applauded, the opposition paper would say he had been hissed; if he drank a glass of wine with his friends, he would scandalize the town by his luxury and debauchery, and if he only drank water they would say he got intoxicated at home. He would be called every morning thief, assassin, suborner,

drunkard, and Irish, and twice a month he would be burned in effigy. If such be the general fate of a mayor in Kentucky, we really cannot blame Mr. Anderson for declining so perilous a post.

Acacia, however, managed to allay his scruples; he had the Irish on his side, as they were all Catholics like himself, and promised to stand any quantity of *Lager-bier* and whisky to ensure the election. In the meanwhile the great hit was to be made with Mr. Lewis, and so one fine morning a crowd assembled beneath his windows with a band playing "Yankee Doodle," and Acacia delivered an admirable speech. Mr. Lewis was in the seventh heaven of delight until the Ingot calmed his transports by coolly telling him that *he* had supplied the enthusiasm. At length, the wished-for Sunday arrived when Mr. Lewis was to preach, and as soon as he had finished, Mr. Benton would ascend the pulpit and refute his heterodox tenets. At a very early hour the rival forces assembled: Appleton, the discharged overseer, now in Craig's service, marched boldly up at the head of a serried phalanx of Methodists, while from the other side advanced a prize-fighting gentleman, Mr. Thomas Cribb, as commander-in-chief of the Irish brigade. It was evident at a glance that the souls of all were in arms and eager for the fray.

For three mortal hours Dr. Lewis held forth, delighting the ladies by his learning. As he had been carefully warned to keep his Abolitionist views hidden, he met with universal favour, and the only person in chapel who yawned was Acacia. In fact, his sermon was only

a short interlude in a country where a speaker will mount the rostrum at Washington on a Monday and end his speech on the ensuing Friday. So soon as Mr. Lewis quitted the pulpit Mr. Benton took his place, and made a bitter onslaught on the doctrines of the last preacher. He denounced Swedenborg and his disciples as impostors and priests of Baal, and he wound up his sermon, "The Swedenborgians are horses, the papists are dogs;" when Tom Cribb suddenly interrupted him by shouting, "And you are a donkey." This remark let slip the dogs of war, and a furious combat at once commenced, while the more respectable portion of the congregation escaped. After a murderous conflict, in which bowies were drawn and revolvers fired, Acacia's party remained entire masters of the field—some half-dozen were killed, but that was nothing. The unfortunate Benton and Appleton had been put *hors de combat* at an early period of the engagement by the redoubtable fists of Tom Cribb.

This defeat only aroused the worst passions of Craig, and he agreed with his accomplice that Julia should be carried off, and forced to marry Appleton during one of Acacia's repeated visits to Louisville. Little did they imagine they would thus be doing the Ingot a service, for he was growing more and more enamoured of Lucy. For all that, though, he did not at all admire the lengthened visits the Rev. Mr. Lewis paid the fair Quadroon—of course for the sole purpose of converting her—and he was beginning to grow jealous, although nothing would have suited his book better than to get

rid of his partner. But while Mr. Lewis was laying himself at the feet of the capricious beauty, the chaste Deborah had begun to feel a sympathy for the handsome young clergyman, which, however, he was not at the moment disposed to reciprocate.

In the midst of all these complications and cross purposes, Acacia was summoned to Cincinnati, leaving the editorship of the paper to Mr. Lewis. Before quitting Oaksburg, he wrote a note to Julia, telling her he was aware of her perfidy, and that he should not return till she was married to Lewis. But he was forced to return much sooner than he anticipated, for he scarce reached his destination when he received a telegraphic despatch from Anderson, telling him that Oaksburg was in flames and Miss Alvarez had disappeared. How had all this come about? The explanation is simple enough. So soon as Acacia had quitted the town, Craig began a virulent attack on Mr. Lewis in the *Herald of Freedom*. Two or three other local papers he bribed joined in accusing the preacher of having come to Kentucky to raise the slaves against their masters. Acacia was represented as the natural accomplice in this horrible design. France and England, jealous of the prosperity of the United States, had resolved to ruin the Southern States by the emancipation of the blacks. The generous citizens of Kentucky, the pride of the American Union, were selected as the first victims of this atrocious enterprise. Europe, fearing their courage, wished to have them all massacred, and found on their corpses a new empire of Hayti. Unfortunately, Mr. Lewis had a destiny for

martyrdom, and having the *Semi-Weekly Messenger* at his command, he immediately put forth his profession of faith, and declared his readiness to shed his blood for the sacred cause of the liberation of the negroes. This was enough for Craig: he published a supplement to his paper directly, in which he quoted Lewis's imprudent remarks, with the following comments: "All Kentucky will now know whether we were true prophets, when we denounced the infamous treason which was preparing in the dark. Perfidious strangers have the impious audacity to attack our national constitution, the ark of our liberties, the work of Washington, Jefferson, of all the great men who had Virginia for a cradle, and who have borne the glory of the American name to the extremities of the world. It is for the people at present to defend their rights with arms in their hands, and to hang those who have wished to break the tables of the law. Let us forget clemency and remember justice only."

This article produced its effect; before the day was out, news had spread through the neighbourhood that an agent of Lord Palmerston had been detected in his flagitious designs, and thousands of armed men flocked into Oaksburg. Craig at the head of the militia, known as the Veterans of Liberty, marched upon the office of the *Semi-Weekly Messenger*, broke in, destroyed the type, and sacked the house. Mr. Lewis, however, managed to escape, while Appleton carried off Julia to a farm belonging to Craig in the backwoods.

Within four-and-twenty hours Acacia had returned to Oaksburg and went straight to Anderson's. Here he

found Miss Deborah lamenting the disappearance of Mr. Lewis, while the Frenchman inadvertently offended Lucy by the warm terms in which he expressed his determination to save Julia or perish. In the meantime, Jeremiah had learned that Lewis had taken refuge in the powder-mill, and though the Ingot had a strong desire to see him tarred and feathered for daring to lift his eyes to Julia, still, his chivalry as a Frenchman urged him to go to the assistance of his unfortunate guest. The mill was surrounded by an armed crowd thirsting for Lewis's blood, but Acacia forced his way through before he could be recognised, and stood by the preacher's side. This redoubled the fury of the mob, but the Frenchman hurling an empty cask among them, which he declared to be full of powder, they fled in all directions, and left the field clear.

Just at this moment the padre informed Acacia where Julia was confined. One of the gang employed to carry her off was an Irishman, and, touched by scruples of conscience, after he had spent his wages of sin in whisky, he revealed all to his priest, who immediately told Acacia. The three men started off at once to rescue her, while the priest was left to publish the following notice to the public:—

"Falsehood!

Infernal Treason!!

Abominable Wickedness!!!

"Magnanimous people, you are deceived! You are aroused against your best, your only friends! A miserable fellow of the name of Craig, and who ought to

be called Judas Iscariot, has unworthily calumniated one of the most honest and loyal gentlemen in all Kentucky. No, M. Acacia is not an abolitionist, and will never be so! He holds that perverse doctrine in horror and detestation. His past life responds for his political and moral principles. This noble child of France imbibed with his nurse's milk the love of order and the Constitution. His journal, the *Semi-Weekly Messenger*, is the organ of all honest people, and of all noble and loyal Kentuckians. M. Acacia has the honour to warn the public and Isaac Craig that he proposes, on the first meeting, to cut off the ears of the, said Isaac, and nail them to the door of the office of the *Herald of Freedom*, as an example to all villains, and a pleasure to all the friends of order."

While this proclamation was left to produce its due effect on the inhabitants of Oaksburg, Acacia, Anderson, and Lewis were galloping at full speed toward Craig's farm. On reaching it, Acacia leaped over the fence, and was attacked by two enormous dogs, which he disposed of with his revolver. The noise of the firing aroused Appleton and Craig, who were at breakfast, and they rushed out to meet the foe. An exchange of shots took place, and Julia made her appearance on the stairs just as Anderson and Lewis entered the yard. At the sight of the new adversaries Craig prudently escaped through the back door, while Appleton rushed up to Julia, Acacia close at his heels. Suddenly the villain drew his bowie-knife, and plunged it in the

Quadroon's breast, and at the same moment Acacia stabbed him dead.

Mournfully the friends returned to Oaksburg, carrying the dying Julia, who was offered a shelter at Anderson's, where Lucy waited on her like a sister. Craig, who had returned to the town, and feared a trial, had already secured himself by finding twelve respectable gentlemen, all prepared to swear that he had not quitted the town for a month. In the mean time, he determined to get rid of Acacia at the first opportunity. This soon presented itself. Just as the gallant Frenchman was entering his office, a ball whizzed past his ear. He turned, and saw Craig taking aim at him once more. Acacia drew his revolver, and fired in turn. A crowd collected to see the fun, and the Frenchman, in his passion, rushed upon Craig. They fired simultaneously: Craig fell dead, while the Ingot received a ball in his thigh, and was borne by the triumphant crowd to the same room where Julia lay dying.

It was not long before the poor girl breathed her last sigh, her dying prayer being that Lucy should marry Acacia, to which the young lady willingly consented, after a decent interval. Acacia has decided on returning to his fatherland, and with his riches he will become the lion of Paris next spring. As for Lewis, he was soon cured of his dreams of martyrdom by espousing Deborah, and is now undergoing a martyrdom of a different description. He and his lady are at present engaged in converting the county of Kent, and Mrs.

Lewis has gained an enormous reputation by the publication of an edifying work called "The Crushed Heart."

In taking leave of M. Assolant and his skits upon America, we are forced to the conclusion—remembering, as we cannot help doing, the latest accounts from that interesting country, in which Mr. Bright takes so lively an interest—that "many a true word is written in jest."

CHAPTER VI.

DUMAS THE YOUNGER.

For many years French literature has been suffering from the worst form of epidemic—that sickly sentimentality which seeks to create interest in social wrong-doing. No heroine could hope to enthral the sympathies of her audience unless she commenced by deliberately breaking the seventh commandment. The long struggles between legitimate and illegitimate affection were sure to evoke a sensation, and if the poor husband were eventually deceived, the public felt all the better pleased with the result. The misfortune was that these details were so mellifluously described, and the worse was made the better argument with such artistic skill, that the readers gradually forgot the viciousness of the system inculcated in admiration of the talent displayed. Even the stage, which has assumed to itself the right to teach morality, pandered to this horrid feeling of false excitement, and for years no piece obtained success which was not established on the fundamental rule of proving that illicit love was the sole object of life. So warped became the public judgment, that husbands unblushingly took their young wives to receive lessons in this modern school of morality, and the natural result was, that they

profited far too greatly by the doctrines they inculcated, and held up for their imitation by their natural protectors. Hence French society became rotten at its core: the wife thought it her duty to follow out to the fullest extent the example which, though wrong, she found extremely pleasant; and that picture drawn by Balzac, in "La Physiologie du Mariage," of the disgust excited by the aspect of a husband in his *bonnet de nuit*, was accepted as a perfect apology for all conjugal aberrations.

The ground being thus prepared, it is not surprising that, some twelve years ago, the *lionnes* assumed their position as a state institution. Hector Roqueplan wittily christened them *les Lorettes*, and their influence daily spread. In every civilized nation the same race of beings exists, but usually they are ignored, and at most allowed to lead a crepuscular life: society tolerates them on the understanding that they do not outrage society. In a word, the family tie is a sufficient guarantee that they will remain harmless. Unfortunately, French manners became gradually so corrupted that the Lorette assumed a position which we can only regard with pity, that the French should have degenerated so far as to hold up such things as the objects of worship. So strongly did the virus spread, and to such an extent, that eventually the women of the "honest and proper world," as they call themselves, were compelled in self-defence to imitate the language, voice, and even dress of these creatures. When a great lady aspired to be taken for a Lorette, it was natural that the latter should

desire in her turn to be taken for a great lady; and hence the breed began to ape a respectability and deference to the external laws of society which rendered them only the more dangerous.

For a time, then, the Lorettes reigned supreme in Paris: they were the leaders of fashion, and authors rushed to pay their allegiance to them. Among others was a young writer possessing an historic name in the annals of literature; for, beyond all question, the novels of Alexandre Dumas père are amongst the best and healthiest that modern French literature has to boast. His son, burning to distinguish himself, set about writing the apotheosis of the Lorette, and the result was "La Dame aux Camélias." As a story, it is poor and clumsy in the extreme. The introductory portion labours under a feeling of unreality, and the revolting incident of the lover exhuming his beloved mistress is very calmly borrowed, without acknowledgment, from Alphonse Karr's "Sous les Tilleuls." We dare not attempt to prove that the story, as a story, is uninteresting, as it is only intended to cast a very thin veil over the most immoral doctrines; for our ladies, who shed briny tears over "La Traviata," when she bewailed her woes in a tongue not generally understood of the people, and wedded to the stunning music of Verdi, would regard us as Goths for enunciating such an opinion. Nor, on the other hand, can we revenge ourselves by recommending them to judge for themselves; for, though they may read the libretto of the opera without a blush, we doubt whether their natural feelings of modesty would

not induce them to cast the book behind the fire after the first page or two. But, stripped of romance, what interest can be excited in a rightly-constituted mind by reading the story of a Lorette who is dying of consumption and yet pursuing her old career of reckless depravity? She then falls a victim to what we presume M. Dumas fils would call a virtuous attachment, and suffers agonies of remorse at being compelled to break it off at the will of a stern father, who is naturally anxious for his son's future well-being, and appeals to her better feelings to aid him. On this one point of virtuous resignation Dumas builds up the whole airy scaffolding of his romance, and bids us admire the wonderful abnegation of a woman whom stern moralists regard as utterly fallen. But it seems to us that this is rather begging the question: few would be disposed to admit that such women are so vitiated that they cannot do one good action, but it does not follow that, by doing it, all their past offences are condoned. London criminals are frequently shown to have done acts deserving the highest praise; but, unfortunately, their punishment in the cruel eye of the law is not lessened a bit in consequence. But we will go further, and assert that the suggestions Marguerite Gauthier makes to her lover are utterly incompatible with even the slightest spark of virtue. By the author's own showing, she is thoroughly infected with the taint of corruption, and in actual life she would not have given up her lover, except on the reasonable supposition that he had no money left to support her extravagance. An anecdote we once heard

of a celebrated London actress will best explain our meaning. A gentleman who had ruined himself for her, after emerging from prison, where he had suffered for her extravagance, called at her house to try whether she had any feeling left, and would take compassion on his sufferings. She ordered the servant to take him into the kitchen, and "give the poor devil some cold meat and bread." And such must inevitably be the conduct of the real Lorette: she feels a bitter detestation for that society which regards her with such cool contempt, and she determines on revenging herself to the best of her ability. Her beauty is sure to attract fools, and the Cynthia of the minute makes them pay bitterly. Poor moths! they come out of the blaze with their wings most terribly crippled.

It is fortunate, then, that Dumas fils has overreached himself in his much-lauded romance, by displaying the utter worthlessness of the woman he selected as his heroine; or was it that, while pandering to the popular taste, he was prudently paving the way for that fierce onslaught on the Lorettes which he commenced at a later date? We would gladly credit him with the latter object, but at the same time we are bound to protest against the false halo which he has shed round Marguerite, to render her attractive to the undiscriminating reader. An extract may be allowed us as a proof that we are justified in the opinion we draw of "La Dame aux Camélias." On the second interview Armand has with her, he professes his feelings, and, like a true Frenchman, explains that he is suffering from an attack

of love at first sight. The lady prudently objects (just after she has been spitting blood, be it remembered) :—

" Mais, malheureux que vous êtes, je vous dirai ce que disait Madame D. : ' Vous êtes donc bien riche ?' Mais vous ne savez pas que je dépense six ou sept mille francs par mois, et que cette dépense est devenue nécessaire à ma vie ; vous ne savez donc pas, mon pauvre ami, que je vous ruinerai en un rien de temps, et que votre famille vous ferait interdire pour vous apprendre à vivre avec une créature comme moi. Aimez-moi bien, comme un bon ami, mais pas autrement. Venez me voir, nous rirons, nous causerons, mais ne vous exagérez pas ce que je vaux, car je ne vaux pas grand'chose. Vous avez un bon cœur, vous avez besoin d'être aimé, vous êtes trop jeune et trop sensible pour vivre dans notre monde. Prenez une femme mariée. Vous voyez que je suis une bonne fille, et que je vous parle franchement."

And this good creature, who thus boldly pronounces her own utter worthlessness, M. Dumas holds up for our admiration. It is simply absurd ; the woman who did homage to such feelings was incapable of any true attachment, if we may use such an expression in connexion with her ; and although we may admire the " Dames aux Camélias" as a work of art, we are not yet disposed to accept it as a reality. It is not necessary that we should pursue this life-drama further, for all the world knows its catastrophe ; we have only attempted to show that the sympathy which has been so lovingly bestowed on a fallen sister by the ladies of England has been utterly thrown away.

Encouraged by his success in this branch of literature, Dumas fils produced another work, much of the same nature and tendency, the scenery being merely changed. "La Dame aux Perles" was gazetted *vice* the "Dame aux Camélias," transferred to the stage. The same sentiments pervade this book: the lady with the pearls is a duchess, who falls in love with an artist, and dies, at the end of a thick volume, in order to excite that sympathy which the reader would otherwise be inclined to refuse her. We have had many stories in England written about wives plagued with bad husbands; but among us the virtue of the wife is exemplified in the patient endurance of wrong; in France, on the other hand, it is her bounden duty to revenge herself in the way most repugnant to husbands. The lady of the pearls is no exception to the universal rule; she commits every sin of which a wife can be guilty, from the earliest period of marriage (for the young artist is not the first avenger of her wrongs, by two or three); and yet we are calmly invited to sympathize with her, and vent all our indignation on the brute of a husband, because he happens to be ill-looking—for all he is a duke. He treats his wife very badly, it must be confessed; but an Englishman can hardly blame him for so doing, regard being had to her conduct. And though it is very deplorable that there are such things as bad husbands in the world, we can hardly regard that as a sufficient reason for the wives making themselves equally bad. And this is the great fault we have to find with all French novelists: they first begin by establishing a

wrong, and work on the principle that two wrongs must infallibly make a right. Hence, then, regarding the "Dame aux Perles" from a bigoted point of view, we can only say that the story is just as unsatisfactory as that of her sister Lorette.

"La Jeunesse à Vingt Ans" can be passed over simply as a failure, of which M. Dumas fils ought to feel profoundly ashamed—that is, always supposing he is still affected by that troublesome feeling. A series of stories relating to the illicit loves of Parisian students cannot possess any great amount of attraction, except to the young and thoughtless; and it was probable for that class this book was written. To us it is strongly suggestive of that sealed packet of which Charles Reade makes such a capital point in his "Never too Late to Mend." Apart from this horrid immorality, however, some of the stories possess considerable piquancy for a certain class of readers; and we may especially refer to the young student at the Polytechnic, and his *bonne fortune* at the Bal de l'Opéra, who turns out to be an elderly lady anxious to obtain a privilege to sell tobacco. Her husband, the old soldier, is very true to nature, as, indeed, are most of young Dumas's men; his experience of the other sex, however, is not yet sufficiently ripened. He has only mixed, apparently, with one class; and we trust that ere long his style may be chastened by contact with a very different style of feminality.

However, while young Dumas was doing his best to confirm the empire of the Lorettes in Paris, another author was preparing their downfal; and with the appearance of "Les Filles de Marbre," they began to

totter on their throne. In this celebrated piece, the greatest success of modern times, the Lorettes were held up to public execration, and displayed in all their hideous cynicism. The impetus was thus given, and Dumas thought it advisable to follow the current of public opinion. His "Diane de Lys" showed in very striking colours the dangers of improper affection. The blow was followed up by M. Emile Augier with his "Mariage d'Olympe," and Dumas put the crown on the whole by his remarkable "Demi-Monde." This threw down the glove to the Lorette class, and the public appreciated the bitter satire which was cast upon them. They never recovered, but abdicated their throne at once, we trust, seriously, never to be reinstated.

The plot of the "Demi-Monde," is simple enough; and the play is only remarkable as the first effective protest against all that offended the decencies and respectability of society. A French officer is just on the point of falling a victim to a Lorette, and allying his unsullied name to infamy, when a friend unmasks her character, and saves him, while consoling the lover's regret for his lost illusions by the phrase, which has since happily become stereotyped in France, "Remember, my dear boy, that an honest woman is only worthy to be the wife and the companion of an honest man." Another famous hit was that about the two baskets of peaches at Chevet's, as illustrative of two types of female society: the thirty-sous peaches and those at fifteen sous were precisely similar to the casual observer; but, on closer inspection, the latter had a speck. We wonder, now that a voice has been heard echoing through the

corridors of the Palais Royal, "The great Chevet is dead!" from whom young Dumas will draw his future illustrations.

The fact that the Parisian public welcomed with such delight and appreciation these violent attacks on the Lorettes, proves that a healthier state of things is gradually arising in France; but, on the other hand, it shows that they must have possessed immense powers, when such a combination of attacks was required in order to dislodge them. But we are bound to give credit, at the same time, to the courage of those authors who thus boldly dared the fury of the Lorettes, and the venom of their numerous partisans in the press. A few onslaughts were made on Dumas, but the general opinion was so strongly on his side, that his discomfited assailants were glad to quit the field and recognise their defeat. Whether Parisian society has been entirely purified of these "pestilences" is a moot point; they may be as powerful in secret now as they were before publicly; but, at any rate, that crying scandal which disgraced our allies has disappeared for a time, and no longer aims to gain notoriety by unblushing effrontery. On the other hand, the higher classes have profited by the example set them by the Empress Eugénie, and no longer deem it a feather in their cap to successfully imitate the manners and conversation of the most dangerous class of humanity, "the syren woman with the serpent's tongue."

The strangest thing about this mania for Lorettism was, that there was no compensation for the disgrace

which men achieved by their forgetfulness of all social and moral ties in their company. It was not that the days of Aspasia had returned, and that statesmen derived inspiration from the lips of an Hetæra; on the contrary, these women, as a general rule, were drawn from the dregs of society, and could by no possibility afford any mental gratification. And yet they gave way to the most extravagant expenses: Marguérite Gauthier, who may be regarded as the type of her class, required at least four thousand pounds a year to live *convenablement*, and yet could not keep free from debt. Men ruined themselves for her, and found a fitting grave in Kabylia; and the estimable heroine boldly avows that she does not feel the least gratitude towards them, but complains that she has lost money by the acquaintance. Surely it was time some one should rise in defence of society, and show the utter worthlessness of the beings for whom men plunged themselves and their families into ruin. It was a horrible condition of things, a species of moral nightmare which brooded over the metropolis of France; and if Dumas the younger has succeeded in dissipating it, he is one of the greatest benefactors to his country the age has produced. But we are afraid the ulcer has only been driven inwardly, ready to break out at the first over-excitation of public feeling; and that, in so far as the race of Traviatas is concerned, France has imitated England; and fancies itself intensely moral, because vice is now concealed from the public gaze.

At any rate, Dumas fils has flattered himself into the

belief that he has been constituted *censor morum*, and having dealt the death-blow to external profligacy, he has sharpened up his weapons and made a dire attack on another great evil from which France is suffering—a tendency to speculation. And here, again, he is only an imitator; the subject was suggested by the success of Ponsard's "L'Honneur et l'Argent," and he has produced a play under the title of "La Question d'Argent." But Dumas is here out of his element, and it is not surprising, therefore, that his last effort has met with very mediocre success. The subject has been worn so threadbare in every age, that it would take a far more clever man than our author to bring forward any novel views. As it is, he has gone over the old ground, and brought together the stock platitudes, and nearly the same class of characters as fretted their brief hour in the "Demi-Monde." There is an honest bourgeois, bitten with the prevalent mania of making money in any manner; and the honest young noble, whose mission it is to correct abuses—in other words, Dumas fils in masquerade. The prominent character, however, is the *nouveau riche*, a M. Jean Giraud, and we will proceed to examine into those parts of the play in which he is mixed up, merely to prove that speculators are the same all over the world.

After passing the Rubicon of *parvenus*, by stating what his father was before him, M. Giraud proceeds to read to the company assembled a lecture on the merits of money, after this fashion:—

"Money is money, whoever may be proprietor. It is

the only power about which no discussion takes place. Folk discuss virtue, beauty, courage, genius, but never money. There is not a civilized being who, on rising in the morning, does not recognise the value of money, without which he would not have a roof to shelter him, a bed to sleep on, or bread to eat. Where is that stream of population rushing, which blocks up our streets, from the porter who pants beneath his oppressive burden, to the millionaire who is carried to the Bourse by a pair of horses?—one runs after fifteen sous, the other after 100,000 francs. Why do we find these shops, vessels, railways, theatres, museums, trials between brothers and sisters, fathers and sons, discoveries, divisions, and assassinations? for a few pieces more or less of a yellow or white metal which is called gold and silver. And who will find the most consideration at the end of this race for crown-pieces? The man who brings back the largest quantity. At the present day a man ought to have only one object, that of becoming rich. As for myself, that was always my idea; I have succeeded, and I am very happy at having done so. Formerly, all the world considered me ugly, stupid, troublesome; at present, they consider me handsome, clever, and amiable, and the Lord knows whether I possess the last two qualities. On that day when I am foolish enough to ruin myself, and become again plain Jean, as I was before, there will not be sufficient stones in the quarries of Montmartre to throw at my head; but that day is far distant, and many a man will be ruined before my turn comes. In short, the greatest

praise I can give to money is, that a company like that in which I now am has had the patience to listen so long to a gardener's son, who has no other claim to such attention save the few paltry millions he has gained."

Such is the Bourse man of the present day, according to M. Dumas's view; if so, we can only say that his parallel is to be found in every country where a Bourse exists. The parvenu who gains position in society from his money is a stereotyped character; and the only thing we may add is, that we infinitely prefer M. Jeames de la Pluche of *Punch* to his brother of Paris. But the man who despises money is also a very old friend of ours, as witness the following extract of a speech made in reply to this defence of money:—

"M. Giraud's theories are only too true in the world where M. Giraud has lived hitherto—a world of speculation, whose sole object is money. As for money regarded by itself, it may be the cause of some infamy, but it also produces many great and noble actions; it is like the human language, which is an evil to some, a blessing to others, according to the use made of it; but that obligation in which our manners place man, of having to trouble himself on rising about the necessary sum for his wants, that he may not rob his neighbour of anything, has created the greatest men of our age. To this want of daily money we are indebted for—Franklin, who began, that he might live, by being a working printer; Shakspeare, who held horses at the door of the theatre which he was to immortalize at a later date; Machiavelli, who was secretary to the Florentine Re-

public at fifteen crowns per month; Raphael, who was son of a sign-painter at Urbino; Jean Jacques Rousseau, who was a notary's clerk, engraver, copyist, and who, also, did not dine every day; Fulton, who was a working engineer, and presented us with steamers; and many others. Had all these people been born with 500,000 francs a year, it is very doubtful whether one of them would have become what he was. This race for crowns, then, of which you spoke, has its advantages. If it enriches a few noodles or scamps, if it gives them the consideration and esteem of the subalterns and inferiors —of those, in short, who have only mercenary relations with society—on the other hand, it effects much good by spurring the faculties, which would have remained stationary in a comfortable existence;—the few mistakes it may make may be pardoned. The deeper you penetrate into that world, which is almost unknown to you, M. Giraud, you will gain proofs that men who are received in it are so for their personal value. Look around you here without going further, and you will see that money does not possess that influence with which you endow it. Here is the Countess Savilli, who has 500,000 francs a year, and who, instead of dining with the millionaires who besiege her house daily, comes to dinner with M. and Madame Durieu, simple bourgeois, who are poor in comparison with her, for the pleasure of meeting M. de Charzay, who has only a thousand crowns a year, and would not do a wrong action for millions; M. de Roncourt, who has a situation of fifteen hundred francs, because he gave up his entire fortune

to creditors who were not his own, and whom he was unable to pay in full; his daughter, who sacrificed her dower for the same laudable object; Mademoiselle Durieu, who will never be the wife of any but an honest man, if all the present and future Crœsuses were to be her rivals; and lastly myself, who have the most profound contempt for money in the acceptation you give to the word. And now, M. Giraud, if we have listened so long to you, it was because we are all well-bred people, and, besides, you spoke well; but in doing so, we did not desire to flatter your millions, the best proof of which is, that they listened still longer to me, who have not, like you, a note of one thousand francs to put into each of my sentences."

Such may be regarded as the two antagonistic elements which Dumas fils proceeds, through the play, to array against each other; and the characters are quite subordinate to the lesson he desires to inculcate. The ladies of the play are also, in their way, types of modern Parisian society, and a vehicle for the sentiments which Dumas would like to see prevalent. Thus, for instance, Eliza de Roncourt has been slighted by an artist to whom she was engaged, and, as a strong-minded woman, expresses the following views about the relations which should subsist in the artist world:—

"I have never married, because a girl without a fortune seldom has a chance, and thus I have reached the twenty-four years I reckon to-day. As for M. Hubert, the proof he did not love me is that he has married a rich woman. Perhaps, if he had felt the

courage to endure a few years of misery, he would have become what he promised to be—a man of genius. Instead of that, he has fallen asleep in his comfort, and has not achieved in art what he was appointed to do. According to my views, an artist should remain master of his life, the first condition of art being liberty. If he meet a woman sufficiently mad to love him, sufficiently happy to be loved by him, she ought to sacrifice her entire existence to him, without asking anything in exchange. Such, little girl, are my ideas about artists in general, and M. Hubert in particular. You are not quite old enough to comprehend them, and it would be better if you never do so. Life has not yet demanded anything from you You are young and rich; you will marry the man of your choice, and will be a good wife and happy mother, while others will undergo the fate which God has decreed for them. How widely you open your eyes!"

To us it does not seem surprising that a young girl should open her eyes to their fullest extent on being indoctrinated with such odious views as these, which, we sincerely trust, are drawn from the Bohemia of artist life, but need not be accepted as the exponents of actual life-feeling. But it is evident that M. Dumas wishes them to be regarded as truthful interpretations of society in Paris; for, only a few scenes later, he gives us the following ideas about a marriage, which the superficial observer would be disposed to regard as guaranteeing all the elements of happiness. Madame Duricu, a lady of birth, married a bourgeois who was well off. Her father, who stood well at court, promised, on the royal authority,

that the happy bridegroom should be made a prefect and a baron. The marriage ceremony was performed, and six months later the Revolution of July broke out, the very day previous to M. Durieu's nomination. The effects of the disappointment we will give in the lady's own words:—

"He made me feel that I was a nobody, in spite of my ancestry, but a poor girl who had the good fortune to marry a rich man. There is no contending, you know, against the superiority given by the money which one of the wedded couple brings to the other. My delicacy may probably have exaggerated my dependence, but I gradually learned to recognise the fact that my husband was in the right. Without him, should I ever have had the servants who waited on me? I should have given lessons in my youth, like Eliza, and afterwards, what should I have become? for what will become of her? My children seem to me less mine than their father's; for if I gave them life, he gives them more than I did, in affording them the means of living. For two-and-twenty years I have checked the accounts, handed them to him, and he pays them, and I have not a hundred francs to call my own, unless I sell one of the last jewels left me from my mother's legacy, as I was obliged to do lately to pay the five hundred francs my son owed M. Giraud. Such, my dear child, is what is called making a good marriage."

It seems to us that this is a perfectly exceptional view to be taken of marriage life; for if such were the result of wedlock, Mr. Malthus's ideas would soon be

predominant. But even allowing, for the sake of argument, that such were the case, it would hardly justify the peculiar views put forward by the heroine of the play. In fact, it is still the old story of striving to prove that two wrongs must necessarily cause a right. But Dumas's speculations go beyond the utmost strictures passed on the matrimonial state by French writers. Even Balzac, who may be allowed to have studied the subject most thoroughly, and to have been led to very unsatisfactory conclusions, would hardly go so far as to suggest that the marriage tie should be abolished because some unions happen to prove unfortunate. And yet, if we follow Dumas's views to their fullest development, we can hardly help feeling that such is the panacea he would suggest for the possible miseries of wedlock. Let us revert to the old system of republican marriage, when husband and wife only agreed to separate: such seem to be the tenets of that modern literary school of which Dumas fils has constituted himself the head. Perhaps before long some new prophet will arise in Paris and preach the blessings of Mormonism. Could a better argument be desired against the partizans of the "woman's rights" question than a reference to the results which female emancipation produces in Paris? But there is another outlet for the unmarried lady, Dumas would advise us, in the following passage, extracted from a scene where the hero and heroine, among other matters, discuss matrimony under its various bearings:—

"*Eliza.* When I am thirty-five or forty years of age,

when I have attained the time when I cannot talk of love without making myself ridiculous, I shall meet some worthy man, a widower, having children to educate, and desirous to give them a second mother, to nurse them and love them, without their feeling jealous of her. . . . . I will marry that man, and end my days in the country, while doing my best to be useful to the children. This is a fine character to play, and, between ourselves, it is the only one I now desire.

"*René.* It is an idea like any other; it has some good in it, and I very well understand this sort of marriage. A man and a woman, both honourable and intelligent, whom circumstances have caused to refrain from marriage during the first part of their life, and who, on arriving at a ripe age, unite calm feelings, gentle philosophy, and harmonious tastes—those people do a sensible act, which contains much promise of happiness. I, for my part, who have no idea of marrying at present, am quite inclined to enter into such a marriage later."

But the heroine is not fated to pass her life so calmly as she anticipates, for our millionaire happens to take a liking to her, and proposes marriage. The reasons for this step are philosophical enough. He does not require a wife who brings him two or three hundred thousand francs, and thus arrogates the right to throw away his millions in diamonds, lace, and cashmere shawls; he wants a wife who will be only too happy to owe everything to him, and feel grateful accordingly. M. Giraud

has evidently very good ideas floating about his head, and he will certainly be immortalized by the Parisian populace for one remark. On being asked what business is, he replies, "Les affaires, c'est bien simple, c'est l'argent des autres." The scene, too, in which he proposes to M. Durieu to engage in a speculation, and entrust him with a sum of money, to be disposed of as he thinks proper, is admirable. M. Durieu has been attacked by the prevailing epidemic, and has lost thirty thousand francs, and is naturally anxious to recover them; but he does not like risking his own money in doing so. M. Giraud philosophizes on the subject as follows:—

"You want me to put you in the way of gaining money without embarking your own capital; you did not invent that. You foresee the day when people will come and tell you that I am bankrupt, and you wish to have it in your power to reply, 'I wash my hands of it; I do not lose a farthing.' But understand, if I set about enriching you, it is because you can be of some use to me. You are one of my prospectuses, I must make something by you; without that I should be an ass. I wish it to be known that M. Durieu, the honourable M. Durieu, has an interest in my house; people will have confidence in me, and bring me money to take care of, which every banking house requires in addition to its own capital; such is my calculation. I have, therefore, greater interest in enriching you than in ruining you, and I have not the least wish to rob you of

your forty thousand francs. It would not be worth the trouble; they will remain in my safe; but I insist on holding them in my possession, to attach you to me."

Unfortunately for M. Giraud, he does not succeed so well in the matrimonial as in the monetary market, for the lady of his choice declines to have a million of francs settled upon her, which he wishes to put aside as a nest-egg, in the event of any untoward accident happening in his speculations. The lofty contempt expressed for money in this scene is quite refreshing and Arcadian. Pity that in real life it appears so utterly unnatural. However, the lady breaks off the match, and M. Giraud soon after disappeared, as it is rumoured, with a grand smash, carrying off large sums belonging to the country and M. Durieu. He suddenly returns, however, in the last scene, and explains that he has purposely spread the report, for the sake of benefiting by it, and he hands over to the speculators the money they have entrusted to him, and a large additional profit. They have been, however, so sickened by their fright, that they determine on only accepting their own money back without profit; and the play ends with M. Durieu writing to his broker to buy into the Three per Cents. for him.

The moral of this play is good, but unfortunately, as we said before, it is old. We require no ghost from the dead to teach us the dangers of speculation; we are all well aware that if we hope to gain fifty per cent. for our money, we cannot also expect security for it, and if we like to risk it we must put implicit faith in the probity

of the person who speculates for us. Apart from the lesson taught against playing on the Bourse, M. Dumas's comedy has no special interest, nor should we have devoted so much attention to it had we not wished to show the way in which morality is driven into the Parisians. But, if M. Dumas imagines he will gain as easy a victory over the Boursiers as he did over the Lorettes, he is grievously mistaken, for the people who applaud his sarcasms most vehemently at night will be the first on the morrow to be guilty of the very faults he points out. The passion for gambling has taken such deep root in Paris at present, that an inspired prophet could not turn the nation from its lust after gold, and years must elapse ere things revert to a healthy condition. Let M. Dumas harangue as he will, he cannot alter the views of the age, and he must not anticipate that he will be able to check the current, even if he write plays far superior to the one at present under consideration.

The investigation, however, which we have attempted to institute into the character of M. Dumas the younger's writings, shows us that he possesses great talent, and could he only tame down his propensity for impropriety, he might yet achieve great things. The momentary success of his first offensive novel appears to have caused him to diverge from the right path, and we sincerely trust that he may yet be able to see the errors of his ways, and try to benefit his fellow-countrymen by drawing his inspiration from a purer fount. As the first step

in the right direction, then, we gladly hail his new comedy; and even though it be inferior in sustained interest to others of his literary productions, it has the immeasurable advantage of being in a measure free from those *maculæ* which have disfigured his previous works.

CHAPTER VII.

A FISH OUT OF WATER.

MOST sincerely do we pity the adventurous Gaul who makes up his mind to a pleasure trip to our own little island, for his stay among us must be a pregnant source of misery to him. Everything is so utterly different to home; the people are so busy that they have no time for the most ordinary politeness; and, worst of all, the barbarians do not talk French, the civilized language *par excellence*, and with which your Frenchman expects to reach the confines of the globe. We know not whether it is that the French have no aptitude for learning languages, or whether their natural vanity forbids them such condescension, but the fact remains the same; you hardly ever find a linguist in France, that is to say possessed of the languages passing current on the Continent. We remember an amiable croupier at Baden, who, though he had resided in the town for twenty years, could not speak three words of German. He would not take the trouble to learn, that was the plain truth. People must talk his language; it was an act of kindness on his part to give them opportunity for practising

And supposing the intelligent foreigner, desirous of

purchasing some small article, rushes like a moth at a candle at the mendacious tablet of glass on which is painted "Ici on parle Français," how wofully is he undeceived! In his joy at being able to discourse once again in his beloved tongue, he pulls up the sluices of his eloquence, and outpours a torrent of words, utterly perplexing to Sarah Jane, who, on the strength of three quarters at a Clapham school, has been appointed interpreter-general to the establishment. The confusion soon grows worse confounded, and they gradually fall back on a language of signs, which more and more convinces the intelligent one that the English are *des barbares*. So he goes back moodily to Leicester-square, packs up his carpet-bag, and returns to his favourite estaminet, where he does his best to convert all his chums into Anglophobists, suffering the while from the frightful indigestion produced by hard beefsteaks and porter, which foreigners persist in devouring as the national dish, with a perseverance worthy of a better cause.

These remarks have been drawn from us by the perusal of a small volume by Jules Lecomte,* in which is a ludicrous, though hardly exaggerated, account of the minor miseries he endured during a stay in England; and this portion of his volume we purpose to analyse, because it furnishes a fair notion of that side of the English character which strikes the foreigner most. But to show the impartiality of the man, we may first

* Voyages ça et là: Italie—Allemagne—Angleterre. Par Jules Lecomte. Paris: Librairie Nouvelle.

be permitted to quote an excerpt from the earlier portion of his volume :—

"We continually ridicule the English and Germans for their pronunciation of French, or mistaking one word for another. Vaudevilles have been written about this, and the comic operas are sure to have some eccentric from across the Channel or the Rhine, constantly exclaiming, 'Godam!' or 'Der Teufel!' But are we so much more brilliant when we try to speak English or German? It is not presumable, and the caricatures we draw may be returned to us with even sharper sallies."

Landing from the Folkestone boat gave our author the first opportunity of comparing English and French; while the former quietly enjoyed their breakfast—for there was three hours' interval ere the train would start—the latter were crushing bonnets and hats in their eagerness to be the first to have their trunks passed. The moral he draws from the different conduct of the English and French travellers is, that they both arrived in London precisely at the same moment—that is to say, "the calmness and moderation which the Englishman displays in all matters contributes to the strength and grandeur of the country, and allows him to build solidly and for the future, while our feverish ardour and impatient frivolity cause us to build on sand."

One of the first things M. Lecomte was recommended in London, so he says, was to doff his red ribbon, for such things are laughed at in England. This he ascribes to

the old story of the fox and the grapes, and there is certainly a slight degree of truth in the following remarks:—

"While, throughout all Europe, merit and distinction are honoured by those external signs which recommend individuals to public consideration (I speak of the principle without taking into account exceptions), English poets, authors, and savans obtain nothing from Government, which, indeed, prohibits them from accepting foreign decorations; whilst among us a man admired for his labours, services, or discoveries, is decorated by his own Government, and by friendly Governments. Here any man who is not of noble birth very rarely obtains these aristocratic distinctions, save in the army or diplomacy. This inferior position must necessarily wound the self-esteem of men worthy to be thus visibly honoured, and who deny the value of what is not accessible to them."

Granted that these remarks are correct, it is a mistake to quote the Legion of Honour as an example. *That* is as common as the Crimean medal among us, and many holders of it decline to wear it on the same principle that a hero of the Redan does not like to place himself on an equality with a commissariat clerk. Besides, Englishmen are susceptible to a peculiar feeling, and officers who have medals and decorations by dozens will not wear them except on state occasions, through fear of being thought guilty of self-laudation. It was the same feeling which induced Humboldt to throw all his orders carelessly into a drawer; they could not increase

his personal value, and he would not attract attention by wearing them. There is one thing, however, to be said in favour of orders: they are a marvellously cheap way of rewarding services, and are employed to a large extent by small German princes, with whom money is a consideration.

Poor M. Lecomte, we had hoped better things of you, but you, too, raise the old stupid cry about the weather in England. He visited our shores in the sunny month of June, and for twelve days it never left off raining; and when he visited Regent-street (which he calls the Rue de la Paix of London, and most unjustly so, for it is thrice as long and twice as handsome as that street, although the Duke of York's column may not be quite equal to that on the Place Vendôme), his already depressed spirits sank to zero at the sight of the lapidary's shop at the Quadrant, where a monsieur in a black coat and white tie was carving the mortuary inscription of a general officer. So, as he could not go out, he decided on taking a tour round his apartments in Wimpole-street, for which he paid, by the way, two pounds a week, with extras for washing, boot-cleaning, fire, candles, lucifer-matches, and toothpick. How the ancient landlady, who of course had seen better days, must have picked the bones of the "furrin gent"! But now for the journey, and, mind you, we reproduce it solely to describe the effect our London lodging-houses have on our brethren from across the water.

In the first place, he falls foul of the carpet, not as a carpet *per se*, but because covered with so many floor-

cloths, &c., to hide the envious rents that time had made. Then the paper did not suit him, for one of precisely the same pattern had annoyed his eyes for months in a shop on the Boulevard. Well, that, at any rate, is no fault of ours. A sympathizing friend had made him a present of some sporting engravings, and these reclined gracefully on arm-chairs, for the landlady could not think of allowing any nails to be driven into her walls. As he laments, "for a Rubens or a Lawrence a nail must not be driven into a paper worth two shillings the piece." His attention was then attracted to a table covered with an immense blue-fringed cloth, which he reverently raised. Call that a table?—nonsense! it is an *entresol*. "If," he adds, sagaciously, "this table become fossilized, it will bear to future ages a colossal idea of the furnishing race of our epoch: it is a very Pelion of a table." The sofa, situated along one side of the room, meets with no greater favour, for on lying down upon it our author was led to the irresistible conviction that the coals were kept under it. But the object that disturbed his mind most was a huge fortress of mahogany occupying one side of the room; the prospect from the top must have been magnificent. He had not the courage to ask what it was, but assumed it was intended to make up a spare bed for a visitor. From our knowledge of lodging-house furniture, we may state that it must have been one of those antiquated sideboards which can only be found in such establishments.

Any person desirous of roasting an ox M. Lecomte

bids welcome, for his fireplace was so enormous that he found it impossible to keep up a "little" fire, as desirable in the month of June. On the chimney-piece was a long, low glass, in which he could just manage to see his eyebrows, and that would be a mortal offence to a Frenchman, while on either side hung two bell-ropes, thick enough to hold a three-decker, and surmounted by a cockade large as the crown of a hat. "Such was the formidable furniture, in the midst of which a man looks like a Lilliputian." Of his bedroom our author gives no details, except that the bed was as narrow as a berth on board a steamer, and the mattress apparently stuffed with sea-biscuits, to render the similitude more perfect. Come, M. Lecomte, you have fairly taken your two pounds' worth out in abuse. But, not satisfied with this, our author falls foul of our language:—

"Everything in this country is *box:* there is the horse-box, a clothes-box, a Christmas-box, box in the garden, a box at the Opera, a salt-box, box to a lock, box to a carriage, a pepper-box, a shooting-box, a box on the ear, a snuff-box, not forgetting *boxer*."

Allowed, M. Lecomte; but does it not strike you as equally absurd in your own language that you have only one word to express your feelings towards a young lady and a leg of mutton? Here is another grand discovery: what is etiquette in England?

"It is not etiquette to blow your nose, to spit, to sneeze. Is it etiquette to have a cold? It is not etiquette to speak loud even in parliament, to walk in the middle of the street, to run in order to escape a passing

carriage. You ought sooner to be *écrasé*. It is not etiquette to seal a letter with a wafer, or to write without an envelope. It is not etiquette to have the slightest pattern on your waistcoat or your neckerchief in going to the Opera, to take soup twice, to bow to a lady first, to ride in an omnibus, to go to a party before ten or eleven, to a ball before midnight, or to drink beer at table without immediately returning the glass to the footman. It is not etiquette not to shave every day, to have an appetite, to ask a person of higher rank to 'liquor,' to be surprised because ladies leave the table with the dessert, to wear black in the morning or colours in the evening; *speaking to a lady without adding her Christian name*, addressing anybody without being introduced, under any pretext, rapping modestly at a door, having a spot of mud on your boots even in the worst weather, carrying halfpence in your pocket, wearing close-shaved hair, a white hat, a pocket-handkerchief for a neckcloth, a decoration or two, braces, a large beard or even a small one,—all this is not at all etiquette."

We sadly fear that M. Lecomte has been meandering through the flowery pages of Ἀγωγὸς, or some others of those teachers of gentility who published their lucubrations from a penny upwards. But, after all, it is of no great consequence; we only quote the passage to show how a really intelligent man can allow himself to be fooled by his prejudices. One thing, we allow, is correct: it is not usual in any society above costermongers to wear a *foulard* round the neck, nor is it

advisable, on being introduced to a lord, to ask him what he will take to drink. Just imagine the intelligent foreigner asked to dinner, and addressing the younger members of the family as Mees Sally, Mees Polly! Now we begin to see why those titles are so fashionable in French novels, when describing the manners and customs of the English. But here is a passage containing much sound sense, which we quote as an apology for the last absurdity:—

"What, above all, outrages English etiquette is, not to be rich, or not to appear so, or not to act as if you were so. Ruin yourself, make debts or dupes, no one concerns himself about that! but, above all, spend money. A stranger arrives: if it is learned that he is lodging in that *Place de Leicester*, where speculation has founded a small colony of hotels for the behoof of saving people, he is lost for a certain world. Never will a carriage or even a lord's card lose its way there. Only occupy, if you please, a bedroom, where you are not at home to anybody, but it must imperiously be in one of the squares adjoining the parks. I believe that the difference of impressions carried away from this country by the opulent man and the man of moderate means result from this respect the Englishman pays to wealth. Aristocratic traditions on one hand, the lively instincts of commerce and trade on the other—traditions and instincts which divide the nation—must necessarily inspire this contempt for poverty, and arouse sympathy solely for people assumed to be respectable, less through their merits and virtues than their opulence, or rather pro-

digality. Respectability is simply the translation of *material advantages*, and not the index of *moral qualities*."

In proof of this, our author mentions that Lucien Bonaparte came to England to live economically, but was compelled to ruin himself lest he might injure the memory of the Emperor. The Czar Nicholas, again, vexed at seeing his subjects embarrass themselves by residing in England, resolved to deal a hard blow at the prejudice which demands that a man must be extravagant would he be honoured. He visited the curiosities of London in a hired cab; the surprise was great, but the lesson was not understood. All that the emperor gained by it was to be somewhat cavalierly received at some of the places he visited.

Equally just are the animadversions M. Lecomte makes on the mania among our lower classes of aping their betters by wearing their second-hand clothing. Nothing strikes the Englishman with greater surprise in Paris than the sumptuary laws that appear to be tacitly maintained there. You never saw a servant, for instance, wearing a bonnet in France; and even among the middling classes of the bourgeoisie the practice is not common—while here!—oh, ye gods!—we might certainly borrow some useful hints from across the water in this respect.

Of course, as it is a Frenchman who is writing, our English ladies demand considerable attention, and he enters into certain learned discussions about Balzac's ideal, *la femme de trente ans*, on either side the

Channel, naturally in favour of his countrywomen. But that is no reason why he should write so rudely as follows about our *jeunes filles*, although he concedes to them the palm of beauty :—

"A young English girl occupies the room of five men in black coats, owing to the circumference of her crinoline. But how pretty they often are, and always so happy! Fair and blonde, they seem to regard everything through a rosy medium. Shakspeare and Byron have admirably depicted them with their Creole nonchalance, their brilliant, enamelled smile, their voices more musical even than their organization, and their snowy shoulders, where the eye fears to see wings developed to bear them to seraphic spheres; but, by Falstaff! Byron and Shakspeare never mentioned their appetites! One day, at the Exhibition, I formed one of a group beneath the green oak-trees in the transept. We had just come from Turkey and India, superb countries, in which irresistible marvels had dazzled our sight. Nothing, it appears, provokes the appetite like admiration. A young miss declared that she required something to support her. We were near one of those gigantic counters, the owners of which made a large fortune by 'supporting' the blonde ladies. I offered to accompany the pining *insulaire*, for English liberty perfectly authorizes such behaviour, prohibited by our manners with respect to persons still free, and which we only deem proper when a lady no longer belongs to herself. We reached the counter. 'What on earth,' I said to myself, 'can this dainty bird find to nibble here?'

as I noticed the massive cakes, the plum-puddings, and and all the ingots of lead cut in slices and built up in pyramids, the very sight of which produced an incipient attack of indigestion. Well, the bird nibbled six shillings' worth! I am still asking myself where she put it all. By her advice, and not to humiliate her, I tried to bite into a block brick, bristling with currants, a whole wall of which had disappeared before her assaults. At the third mouthful, I felt so full, that I asked mercy of myself, and not knowing what to do with the block, I adroitly conjured it into my pocket. As for the young, fair, and rosy miss, I took her back to her parents thus supported, and in a condition, I assure you, to wait for dinner."

Still, England is not all bad, M. Lecomte graciously concedes; and he expresses his surprise at seeing pine-apples for sale in the street at a shilling apiece. But he only mentions this, apparently, as an excuse to lug in the old story about the pine-apple Rachel hired from Chevet for one of her dinners, and the awful alarm she was in lest it should be cut. By the way, that must have been a very large dinner-party; we have found the story with variations in at least fifty books, every author having been present at the time.

We may pass over the sneering chapter M. Lecomte devotes to M. Jullien and his success, for there is no doubt the monsieur did us a good deal of good in a musical point of view, and we do not think it becomes a compatriot to treat him so *de haut en bas*. At any rate, Jullien has shown his taste by being grateful for

the patronage he received among us, and has not repaid us by insult, as so many of his countrymen have done. The mention of Jullien naturally leads our author to a consideration of our public amusements, and he very comically expresses his surprise that, though it is only one shilling to go to Cremorne Gardens, the "tottle" swells up wofully ere you have entirely "seen the elephant."

"But the entrance ticket only affords you the restricted pleasure of walking about a space limited by boards, hedges, and beds of flowers. To see the balloon on the adjoining green, one shilling; to see the menagerie, shilling; to sit down in the kiosque, shilling; to hear the band, shilling; the circus, shilling; the wild woman, shilling; and so on. If you are thirsty, sundry shillings; if you are hungry, many shillings. So that, unless you are alone (and how could you go alone?) multiplying the persons by all these shillings, you soon realize the story of Hop-o'-my-Thumb with the pebbles."

The reference to food and drink calls up their antidote, medicine, which M. Lecomte declares is brandy among us. When in Italy, some native ladies he was in company with, on being offered a cup of tea, politely replied, "Thank you, we are not ill." But in England tea shares with beer equal rank as a beverage, as a digestive for the vast quantities of beef eaten. But brandy, as we said before, is the universal remedy. But after all, M. Lecomte does not come up to a writer on England whose work came across us the other day, and who gravely states that at lords' tables the water-

decanters are always filled with *gin*, to spare the blushes of the ladies, who would not like to be seen drinking ardent spirits.

Although M. Lecomte professes such an aversion to England, it is plain that he must have visited our country several times, for he was intimately *lié* with Count d'Orsay, whose character he very tenderly appreciates. Still, that does not prevent him telling a malicious anecdote about him, which is too amusing to be omitted:—

"D'Orsay owed some hundreds of pounds to a silversmith in the City. This debt annoyed him. A rich Indian arrived from Calcutta, who talked about buying a service of plate, and the count introduced him to his creditor. Our Indian orders nearly ten thousand pounds' worth, and the order is executed in a few weeks. Well, one fine morning he disappears. Great alarm on the part of the silversmith, who falls back on the introducer of the decamped nabob. Hence endless scenes, and lastly, disquieting menaces for the liberty of the count. At length, one morning—I witnessed the scene—the silversmith falls flat on his debtor and guarantee, with eyes starting from his head: he insists on being paid, or, unless he receives the bond of a lord he named that very day, M. le Comte would be condemned not to set foot outside Gore House except on Sunday. Now, it was in June, the fashionable season *par excellence*. D'Orsay reflected in his bath, while the silversmith, all scarlet, vociferated in the cabinet, and pointed out the seedy bailiffs, who were already blockading the house.

"'So, I have said it, Sir Count,' the man with the silver hot-dishes shouted, 'this evening at five I must have Lord P.'s guarantee, or you will pass the season invested in Gore House. My bloodhounds will not allow you even to breathe the fresh air in Kensington Gardens.'

"And the tone was most insolent.

"The count was still reflecting, and said not a word. The silversmith was about to leave, and had already clapped on his hat.

"Suddenly D'Orsay bounded from his bath.

"'Stay!' he exclaimed; 'it is useless to think about Lord P.'s guarantee. We have quarrelled. But I have something far better. You shall be satisfied.'

"The tradesman stops, and takes off his hat. D'Orsay, dripping with water like a Triton, takes up a knife from a writing-table, and walks up to a glass-case containing a general's uniform.

"'You see that coat,' he said, as he opened the door, 'this embroidery, these decorations? In that coat my father died! It is sacred to me like the uniform in which Nelson was killed aboard the *Victory*, a relic shown at Greenwich Hospital.'

"The silversmith looked, without exactly knowing what would come of it, and already somewhat mastered by these great words and the count's commanding tone.

"'Well?' he muttered.

"'Well, I have decided to make a great sacrifice to satisfy you. Take this,' he added, cutting the thread which fastened one of the buttons, and handing it

majestically to his creditor, who was palsied with surprise. 'That is one of the nine buttons which served to fasten this noble coat across my father's chest. I entrust to you the one nearest his cross of honour—a cross Lord Byron gave him, and which was found on the field of Waterloo. Come, that is worth more than the guarantee of all the lords in the three kingdoms. Before a month you shall be paid.'

"And after saying this, the count goes back to his bath, turns quietly to me, and says:—

"'You were speaking, I believe, of the Lord Mayor's show?'"

"'But—but suppose you do not pay me in a month?'" the creditor murmured, very timidly.

"'Well, then—then you can keep the button of my father's uniform,' D'Orsay said, pulling the bell, and indicating the tradesman to the valet, who lugged him away.

"I could not but admire such a use of the gift of fascination. The count's grand air, his almost desperate act, his confiding and resolute tone, the great words and great names—uniform, general, father, cross, embroidery, Nelson evoked, and Byron and Waterloo mixed up in the affair—all this had fascinated, subjugated the City Jew; he went away, without venturing to say the security was not good, and he was in the right. A fortnight later the Indian, who had only made a sudden trip to Scotland, turned up again, paid everything, and D'Orsay wrote me that he had had the button sewn on again, near the cross of honour."

We have reached our limits, or we might cull many more amusing extracts. One must suffice to show that our author is perfectly satisfied with the impartiality he has displayed as regards England :—

"On arriving at the last page of these sketches, I ask myself if I have exaggerated in any degree, and I reply to myself, No! I have looked at London life, such as it appears to a continental, brought up to other manners and customs, fashioned in other tastes, animated by other instincts. I have certainly not dreamed of contesting the political grandeur, the industrial power, the financial force, and rare nationality of mind. But I proclaim England sterile in everything that forms the intellectual, elegant, artistic life of our Continent; and I declare it all iron and coal. Beyond that it is only a copyist without conviction; it has neither ears to hear, nor eyes to see. It pays musicians and painters exorbitantly, but it only purchases them the vain pleasure of appearing to understand them. Besides, the country is a deplorable abode for any man who was not born in it. There, neither the body nor the mind is at ease. I only need one proof, more eloquent than anything I can say; and that proof is a fact. You never find a Frenchman, German, Russian, or Eastern, fixed in England *for his pleasure*. The Continent, on the other hand, pullulates with English, who, having made a fortune, hasten to fly their country, and enjoy among us the pleasures of existence. Let those who have found my remarks too caustic reply to that."

A word in parting, M. Lecômte. You and certain of

your countrymen cannot help recognising the superiority of England, and you set to work with malice prepense to blacken us. You must look at us through darkened glasses, for our grandeur, like that of the sun, dazzles your weak vision. You are thousands of leagues behind us in the path of progress, and you cannot hide the fact from yourselves; while you know that the few miles of blue water dividing us from you are an impassable barrier for your vaunted cohorts. If you cannot conquer us fairly as man to man, you try to ridicule us; but it is only like the viper biting the file. You may say what you please of Englishmen; hold them up to ridicule, calumniate them, draw the most exaggerated caricatures of them and their habits, and they forgive it all. All the revenge we take, in the name of the nation, is to lay your statements before our readers, and we have no doubt that they will be received with the hearty laugh they deserve.

CHAPTER VIII.

ITALY IN 1848.*

NAPOLEON III. declared war against Austria from no motives of personal aggrandisement—at any rate he said so: he was prepared to sacrifice the lives of thousands of his soldiers, perchance risk his crown, for the noble motive of liberating priest- and soldier-ridden Italy. It was a glorious mission, worthy the self-devotion, even immolation of an empire. How could Frenchmen, themselves revelling in liberty, but hasten to impart the same blessing to the whole world? Is it not the destiny of the Napoleonides to found the great universal Republic of Christian fraternity, in which the lion will lie down with the lamb, the Austrian hold the Gaul in brotherly affection?

Unfortunately, however, nations are so perverse, that they cannot be induced to accept what is good for them without some coercion—just as naughty children will not swallow their draught without sundry monitory slaps from the nurse. The Austrians did not appreciate the blessings the French offered them; the consequence was, they must be compelled to accept them. The

* La Guerre de l'Indépendance Italienne en 1848 et 1849. Par le Général Ulloa. Two Vols. Paris: Hachette et C^ie^.

Italians (so the French said) were thirsting for liberty, and kissed the hand of the enlightened monarch who offers it to them. But we know the old sad story—general illumination, slight intoxication, the result of little wine and much shouting, tricolors planted on every house, and, when called upon to act, general desertion of the cause. But, in such cases as these, parallels will be found more effective than argument: hence we may be permitted to survey the conduct of the Italians on the last occasion when liberty was in their grasp and they allowed it to slip through the fingers. But, first, a word as to the Italian character.

What is the "national element" to which the emperor has so repeatedly alluded as requiring satisfaction in Italy? For centuries a contest has been going on upon the fertile plains of Lombardy for the supremacy of Germany or France. From the Sicilian Vespers to the battle of Pavia, from the campaigns of General Bonaparte to the victories of Radetzky, Germany's power and France's thirst for conquest have been in continual collision on Italian soil. But, never so far as the world's history can trace back, was Italy *one* kingdom; never was it recognised as such in the negotiations of nations. Even world-commanding Rome never entertained the idea of converting Italy from a geographical expression into a political reality. The Roman right of citizenship ennobled: and raised Gaul and Grecian, Apulian and Etruscan towns and provinces into political importance. Rome, not Italy, was the idea of unity; it was at once the *orbis et urbs terrarum*. In the highest bloom of

the Renaissance, when the mental magic of art was poured over the world from Rome, Florence, and Venice, when Bologna founded the first college for jurisprudence, and the thirst for investigating the mental treasures of ancient Greece and Rome spread from Central Italy through European society—even in that memorable epoch of the highest development, Italy only offered a picture of the deepest moral degradation and the most frightful self-laceration. We find one city even in a death-feud with another; in the interior of every city always two or three classes contending with demoniac fury through centuries; the dynastic races of Italy—more especially those whom the favour and love they displayed for poetry, painting, and the plastic arts have rendered proverbial and immortal—were at the same time branded with adultery, murder, fratricide, poisoning, crime and villany of the most fearful description. The scum of humanity in their worthlessness and corruption favoured the celestial creations of the artistic world; and in Italy, the fair land of contradictions, moral and political villany and degradation fostered the most elevated types of the sincerest expression of art-piety.

Once again Rome became the centre of the world—as the home of Christianity. But the very character she bore, as the capital of the Christian world, forbade any expression of nationality in a political sense. Papacy in Rome was no more specifically Italian in Rome, than violence could render it specifically French at Avignon. As a powerful, admirable ecclesiastical institution, it

may become at the same time a political one, but never, in the higher sense of the term, national.

Thus the character of the Italian races has been gradually developed into what it now is: sensual, amiable, agreeable, and passionate, with no constancy in love, but ardent in hate; morally sunk, and politically confused; unwilling to obey, and yet incapable of self-government; ever hating the man who holds power over them, but detesting even more any progress of an Italian race beyond other cities or provinces except those from which it has its origin. The law, even the most just, is to the Italians only the external, actual repression, but in no sense the expression of that universal moral order which they do not understand, but which they all join in despising. The "Italian fatherland" is to them merely a phantasm, because it possesses no historical basis, no national concord, no political foundation. The Italian lazzarone does not own a countryman in the Lombard, nor the Venetian in the Calabrian; to the Roman, the Sardinian is an utter stranger; the Genoese looks down with contempt on the mixed race which governs in the "haughty city." For political liberty the Italians lack the moral earnestness, for political union the historical substratum, and the slightest feeling for fraternity and that mutual indulgence between races who for thousands of years have known no common bond of union.

In 1847, Pio Nono, by his ill-judged reforms, raised that cry for nationality which Louis Napoleon is now producing by the presence of his cohorts. Charles

Albert put himself at the head of the movement, owing to his detestation of the Austrians, and solemnly declared he did not design war at the very moment his army had orders to cross the Ticino. Never had the position of Austria been more critical: after four days' hard fighting, Radetzky had been driven out of Milan, and the entire population of Lombardy rose in arms. The Neapolitans had compelled the king to send his army and fleet to the support of the national cause: Durando was hurrying up at the head of twelve thousand volunteers, and worse than all, Austria was in a flame from one extremity to the other of her gigantic empire.

Under these circumstances, the Piedmontese army was enabled to cross the Mincio almost without striking a blow; the heights of Pastrengo were taken after a most gallant action that lasted three days, and the fortress of Peschiera was closely invested. The description General Ulloa gives of Peschiera will prove interesting in the present state of the war.

The siege-train expected from Turin having partly arrived in the middle of May, Charles Albert decided on attacking Peschiera. The artillery he had received consisted of twenty-eight 24-pounders, ten mortars, and seven howitzers. The Duke of Genoa was entrusted with the direction of the siege. Peschiera is situated on the Tyrolese frontier, on the southern border of the Lago di Garda, on the road from Brescia to Verona. At the spot where the Mincio quits the lake and runs in a southerly course, there is a double tête de pont, formed of five bastioned faces, to defend the town. One

of these faces commands the lake, two command the left, and two the right bank of the Mincio. The enceinte contains five bastions, one cavalier, two lunettes, and two counter-guards. On the right bank are the two lunettes la Mandella, which form a sort of bastioned front without a curtain; and also the Salvi lunette, with a covered way in front of the works, running from the lake to the Mincio. It is a fortress of the third class, if we take its size into consideration.

The Tyrolese frontier is intersected by a certain number of routes, some running direct to Peschiera and the Mincio line, while others are to the rear of that line: the road running from Trent or Rovoredo to Brescia and Mantua is among the latter. Peschiera protects one of the sides of the Mincio line: it offers a shelter to the lake flotilla, and commands the road from Brescia to Verona, while offering its owner the power of crossing, as he pleases, to either side of the river. It is, therefore, mistress of the navigation of the lake and the Mincio, and by means of the latter communicates with Mantua. It will be thus seen of what advantage the occupation of Peschiera is to an army placed on the line of the Mincio, and which must attempt to cover its flanks before commencing operations in the quadrangle.

It must be borne in mind that in 1848 the Sardinians required seven weeks ere they could reduce Peschiera, while at the present time its strength has been more than doubled.

While these events were occurring in Italy, the Austrian Government, justly alarmed, proposed certain

terms, in carrying out which they requested the intermediation of the British Government. What they were will be best seen from the following most important letter which the Marquis Bossi, Lombardese envoy to London, sent home to his Government :—

"London, May 21.

"The communication of your despatch of the 13th May, and of the law of fusion annexed to it, has produced a magical effect on the mind of Lord Palmerston, even greater than I had expected. I saw his face unwrinkle, and he said to me, 'That causes me great pleasure; it is the best possible thing for the peace of Europe and the welfare of Italy.' He traced with me on the map the new future kingdom up to the Alps, thus comprising the Venetese, Modena, and Parma, and asked me how many inhabitants it might contain. He spoke of the topographical advantage this state would possess, its wealth and strength, so that it would be able to resist any foreign invasion. Then he informed me that M. de Hummelauer had just quitted Vienna, and would probably arrive this very day in London, on a mission to request the amicable mediation of the British Government to treat with Italy. That Austria would probably commence by demanding the line of the Adige (thus retaining the Venetese), but that he (Lord Palmerston) was well aware this was impossible; and that the only basis of negotiations was the utter abandonment of Italy by the Austrians. Lord Palmerston evinced an anxiety to come to a speedy settlement,

and considered the time thus gained a very important matter under present circumstances, thus evidently alluding to a spontaneous armed intervention on the part of France, which he greatly fears. By my latest advices, I think that is very remote, but it is useful for us that England should fancy it more imminent than it really is."

It is now known that Lord Palmerston strongly impressed on Charles Albert, in behalf of the monarchies imperilled by the revolutionary spirit, and of his own immediate dynastic interests, that he should accept these conditions and treat at once. But the king was so blinded by his personal hatred of Austria, that he would not consent to yield, or realize the ambition of his house, so long as a single foreigner remained in occupation of a corner of Italy. The result was his ruin, and he had only himself to blame.

The tide had begun slowly to turn in behalf of Austria: the King of Naples had effected his counter-revolution, and recalled his troops, while the Pope, even at so early a date as May, had threatened with his interdict those who dared to attack his beloved sons, the Germans. But Austria found a still better friend where she had least expected it: Mazzini, the arch-republican, had begun to arouse suspicions as to the disinterestedness of Charles Albert, and such is the temper of the Italians, that they eagerly listened to the falsehood.

So soon as Radetzky was assured of the retreat of the Neapolitans, he decided on attacking on the offensive in

his turn, and, leaving a strong garrison in Verona, he made a flank march on Mantua, where he arrived on the 28th of May. The Tuscan volunteers were stationed at Curtatone, a village about an hour's march from Mantua, on the banks of the Upper Lake. The volunteers fought with the most extraordinary bravery, holding the Austrians at bay for a whole day, which drew from Radetzky the indignant remark, "I shall lose a day through these boys." As a compensation for this, on the same day, an Austrian corps that attempted to introduce provisions into Peschiera was cut off by Durando's volunteers. So great was the alarm produced by Radetzky's movements, however, that Charles Albert fell back on Goito with the greater part of his troops, lest the Austrians might cut off his retreat. The command of the Piedmontese was taken by General Bava, who had about seventeen thousand men of all arms, and forty-four guns.

Radetzky came up to the attack with twenty-two thousand men, hoping to carry with this force a strong position defended by an army almost equal to his own, and which was concentrated on a very small space of ground. The Austrians attacked the Piedmontese left, and gradually the fight extended along the whole line. Five times did Benedek attempt to carry the position of Goito, and was on each occasion repulsed with loss. The Piedmontese artillery was magnificently served, but the Austrians gradually forced their way through the Piedmontese, and threatened to cut off their retreat. At this moment the Duke of Savoy, at the head of the

Cuneo brigade and the Second Guard regiment, attacked the enemy at the bayonet's point, and drove him back from the centre and right. At the same moment the Sardinian left succeeded in repulsing Benedek, and Radetzky gave the signal for retreat. At the very moment when the victory declared in favour of the Piedmontese, the news of the surrender of Peschiera arrived.

The Austrian reserves had by this time reached Verona, and Radetzky was enabled soon to resume the offensive. His first move was on Vicenza, which city was held by Durando at the head of about eight thousand men. After a day's hard fighting, Durando was compelled to capitulate, and the garrison was permitted to retire with arms and baggage, under a promise not to serve against the Austrians during the next three months. While this brilliant affair was being performed, Charles Albert remained very quietly in front of Verona, hardly supposing that an enemy, immediately after a defeat, would attempt such a daring enterprise. At length he determined on attacking the heights of Rivoli, the possession of which would intercept the Austrian communication with the Tyrol by the left bank of the Adige. The heights were occupied without any opposition, but on the same evening Charles Albert heard of the Austrian success of Vicenza, and determined on crossing the Adige and taking Radetzky between two fires. The scheme was excellent, but was foiled as usual by the king's indecision, for by the time it was carried out Radetzky had safely returned to Verona at the head of eight thousand men.

The Piedmontese were now beginning to get into a very awkward position; the Austrian army was being daily reinforced, and the Italians were already beginning to grumble at the slowness of their operations. They considered that the walls of Verona would have fallen at the mere presence of Charles Albert, and were much disgusted at the delay in expelling the Tedeschi. Anxious to humour his new subjects, Charles Albert decided on investing Mantua! This was the height of folly: it is probably the most impregnable place in Italy, and besides, the king had in front of him an army numerically superior to his own. Under these circumstances, Radetzky decided on assuming the offensive in his turn; he had nothing to fear for Mantua, which was held by sixteen thousand men, and provisioned for six months, and he had an army at his command of 132,000 men, with two hundred and forty guns. Of this number, eighty-two thousand opposed the Piedmontese army of sixty thousand, and were enabled to manœuvre at their ease on the terrain between Mantua, Verona, and Legnano. The Piedmontese could therefore do nothing else than slowly fall back on Custozza, Radetzky following them up with equal slowness, although effectually clearing the environs of Verona before he set out.

Owing to the miserable strategy of Charles Albert, Radetzky was enabled to force Bāva into an engagement with only twenty thousand men. On the morning of the 26th July, Bava marched on the village of Valeggio, which covered the Austrian centre, with the

Aosta brigade, but the superiority of the enemy's strength compelled him to defer any decided attack till the arrival of reinforcements he had requested from the Duke of Savoy. At mid-day a regiment of Guards came up, and with its aid Bava attacked the Austrians. In spite of the bravery and efforts of his troops, he could not, however, break through the Austrian line, which held a very strong position, and he was compelled to cease fighting until the Dukes of Savoy and Genoa had gained some decided success on their side. Unfortunately, badly executed orders delayed the march of the Piedmontese and the arrival of the commissariat, so that Gyulai was enabled to occupy the heights commanding the Duke's brigade. Thus the Duke of Genoa, instead of acting on the aggressive, found himself assailed at once by Gyulai and Perrin, who had come up on the other flank. The former, at the head of his brigade, advanced on Somma Campagna, while Perrin attacked the flank on the east. Although the Duke had only five thousand men under him, he repulsed the enemy's repeated assaults at the point of the bayonet, and held his ground nobly till nightfall.

In the centre the Duke of Savoy had assumed the offensive, and the Cuneo brigade and a half-brigade of the Guard at first gained some advantage over the Austrians, but Radetzky, having fresh troops continually at his command, did not find any difficulty in repulsing all the attacks of the Piedmontese. At length, Schwarzenberg's brigade, of two battalions and a 12-pounder battery at Goi, compelled the Duke to fall

back on Custozza. Bava was still waiting before Valeggio for news of the success obtained by the right of his army, but he at length decided on action, and tried to throw back the left wing of the first Austrian corps d'armée. The Aosto brigade, supported by the brigade of the Guard, charged the heights of Monte Vento, and had almost carried them, when a fresh Austrian brigade came up and drove them back. Bava, being quite unsupported, was forced to retreat, and fell back on Villafranca in perfect order. The Duke of Savoy, who commanded the rear-guard, only yielded the ground step by step, and thus for the third time since the commencement of the campaign he checked the progress of the victorious enemy, and saved the army from a heavy disaster.

The loss of the Piedmontèse was fifteen hundred killed and wounded, that of the Austrians about two thousand five hundred. During two days twenty thousand Piedmontese had bravely sustained the attack of fifty-four thousand Austrians, leaving in their hands very few prisoners, and having themselves captured one hundred and twenty of the enemy. But the *morale* of the army was terribly affected by the loss of this battle; it saw that all the efforts hitherto made had been in vain; all the positions gained during three months had been torn from them in a few days, and they were suffering from the added misery of starvation.

After the disaster of Custozza, Charles Albert fell back on Goito, and he decided on trying to carry the heights of Volta, in order to maintain the line of the Mincio.

Unfortunately, the Austrians were in too great strength, and after a most sanguinary engagement the Piedmontese were driven back. This completed the demoralization of the Piedmontese army, and Charles Albert hastily requested an armistice, offering to retreat behind the Oglio. But Radetzky, in the pride of victory, demanded terms to which Charles Albert could not consent. He insisted on the line of the Adda and the return of all prisoners. The king, therefore, determined on resting his army for two or three days, and thus restore the courage of his troops. Unfortunately, the evil was greater than he suspected: the men deserted in large numbers, and the king was forced to retreat once more. He had fifty thousand men still under his orders, but his fatal connexion with Lombardy was his ruin; his only chance would have been to fall back on Piacenza and compel the Milanese to rise in self-defence, which would have impeded the advance of the Austrians, but, fearing the accusation of treachery, he fell back on Milan.

The retreat of the army took place in the greatest disorder; the roads were covered with exhausted men, who lay down and refused to move. Much of this, however, was owing to the villany of the Lombardese commissioners, who allowed the troops to starve. Charles Albert arrived before Milan on the 3rd of August, at the head of but thirty thousand men; no preparations had been made for his reception at Milan, no provisions collected; and even the six thousand volunteers recently organized in the city, had gone off to Brescia,

under Garibaldi. Under these untoward circumstances the king determined on one more desperate engagement. Radetzky came up on the 4th with sixty thousand men and two hundred guns, and after six hours' hard fighting the king was compelled to fall back on Milan. He then made overtures to Radetzky, and offered to retire behind the Ticino. The Austrian general gave him two days to return to Piedmont, offered a complete amnesty to the city, and promised that persons and property should be respected.

The first person who brought the news of the capitulation to Milan was murdered by the people, who, however, soon turned their entire wrath on the king. At the moment he was preparing to quit the city, the Palazzo Greppi was invaded by the mob, and he was implored by a deputation to defend the city; all the inhabitants, he was assured, would rise as one man to fight. Yielding to his chivalrous nature, the king tore up the capitulation, and promised to find a grave beneath the walls of the city with his army. He then appeared on the balcony, to repeat his imprudent promise in the presence of the people. But the Milanese, ignorant of what had taken place in the meanwhile, began to insult him, and accused him of treason. The Piedmontese fearing for the safety of the king, ran up and menaced the people, who had seized the Duke of Genoa, and held him as hostage. In the midst of the confusion the municipality decided on sending another deputation to Radetzky, begging him to renew the capitulation, which he readily consented to. Then the people were

informed that those of them who desired to leave the city might do so with perfect safety till eight the next morning. The disorder rose to a fearful pitch to prevent Charles Albert's departure; they threatened to burn the palace down in which he was, and even some shots were fired at the windows. In the faubourgs a large number of houses was burned to the ground to ensure the defence of the town, and the tocsin never left off pealing.

In the end, Charles Albert, worn out by all this violence, left the city, escorted by two companies, and joined the army, which crossed the frontier again the same evening. In the morning of the 6th of August Radetzky entered the city at the head of his army, and the population assumed an attitude of sorrow and dejection.

At this period both Austrians and Piedmontese had an interest in suspending hostilities. If, on the one side, Charles Albert's army was discouraged, and would not on any consideration have fought again for the defence of the Milanese, on the other hand Radetzky could not venture into Piedmont, leaving behind him Venice and the Legations in a state of insurrection, and the Lombard population ready to take up arms again. He was also aware that the French Government would not allow him to draw too close to the frontier. On the 9th, therefore, the two armies agreed on an armistice, whose duration was at first fixed for forty-five days, but which could be prolonged indefinitely, on the condition of the prolongation being announced eight days beforehand. This armistice

received the name of *di Salasco*, from the name of the Piedmontese chief of the staff who signed it. It was decided that the frontiers of Lombardy and Piedmont should serve as the limits to the two armies; and the Piedmontese agreed, in addition, to evacuate Peschiera, Rocca d'Anfo, Osopo, Venice, and the Duchies, and withdraw their fleet from Venice.

The leaders of the volunteers generally managed to escape into Piedmont, with the exception of Garibaldi, who determined on carrying on the war upon his own account. He marched with his legion to the Lago Maggiore, and seizing two steamers landed at Luino. He intended to remain in the mountainous country between the two lakes and organize a guerilla war. But the second Austrian corps d'armée was sent in pursuit of him, and caught him at Morazzone. Garibaldi fought a very gallant action against far superior forces, and during the night succeeded in falling back on Luino, whence he retired into Switzerland.

It is difficult to decide where the fault lay that ruined the Sardinian army. Some ascribe it to the incapacity of the king, and though there is no doubt he did considerable mischief by his indecision, still it should not be forgotten that, had he accepted Lord Palmerston's offer, and the campaign had terminated in June, when the army had forced the line of the Mincio, carried the positions of Colà and Pacengo, gained the battles of Pastrengo and Goito, and occupied Peschiera and Governolo, the capacity and military ability of the king would have been exalted to the skies. One battle lost

was sufficient to convert all the praise into blame; but this is unjust. Radetzky lost two pitched battles, was defeated in several engagements, but in less than three months he received more than forty-seven thousand men as reinforcements, well armed, well equipped, and well commanded. He only gained one battle out of three; but, owing to the weakness of his adversary, the result was decisive: the public applauded the victor, and considered him a skilful general. Charles Albert, on the contrary, is cried down, and considered a miserable tactician, in spite of two battles gained; but he found it impossible to fill up the gaps in his army except with poor recruits drawn from the reserves, with volunteers, ready-made generals and officers, and naturally the loss of one battle left him without resources.

CHAPTER IX.

ROMANCE AND REALITY.

We wonder whether any psychologist will eventually succeed in gauging the profundities of the Gallic character—in drawing up a moral chart of its shoals and abysses, and indicating the sunken rocks on which the best reputations are too frequently shattered? Such a work is a decided desideratum, and to none more so than oursèlves at the present moment, for we have a very difficult task before us; it is neither more nor less than to analyse one of the passing *affaires de cœur* of a celebrated French authoress, and regard it from two different sides—the one presented by herself, the other by an enemy.

In one respect French authors are decidedly beyond their English *confrères:* not only do they enjoy all the sweets of love, but when the passion has died away by mutual consent, the gentleman very speedily converts it into capital by writing a book, in which he analyses his last great passion, and shows in what it differed from the one immediately preceding it. He does this with such minuteness of detail; describes all the *nuances* of the passion—its birth, its apogee, and its decline—with such precision, that the English reader is almost tempted to

cry, "Name, name!" In France, every action of the successful novelist is carefully brought to publicity, so that the patrons of the circulating library need only turn to the latest purveyor of literary garbage and say to themselves: "Stay, at the time Monsieur Chose was writing this book, he was the friend of Madame de St. Amour," or as the case may be; hence, he reads the story with double zest, because he imagines, and has good reason for doing so, that he is getting behind the secrets of two persons whom he may yet chance to meet in society.

We believe M. Eugène Sue was the first among the great French authors who brought this system of holding up one's hidden loves to the glare of day into fashion. At any rate, it is quite certain that "Mathilde" became the rage in Paris, because the heroine could be pointed at with the finger. Both the Dumas indulge in the same bad habit; but the old gentleman is the worst of the two in this respect: he is not satisfied with describing his own volatile loves, but he introduces ladies belonging to his friends and relations. Thus, we remember reading in the "Mousquetaire" a most glowing account of his first introduction to his son's "Dame aux Perles," and the paternal benediction he gave her. In the same way M. Jules Janin has sinned more than once; and probably few things are more repulsive to the English taste than that introductory chapter to the "Dame aux Camélias," in which he describes his first interview with the real Marguerite Gauthier. Vice, to be rendered in any way palatable to the English taste,

must be carried beyond the verge of probability; but when we have it thus realized, when we are conscious that the author is drawing from the living model, the sensation produces a moral revulsion. Not all the skill of word-painting Dumas the younger possesses can make us forget that his are no fancy sketches, but that he has lived through the scenes he depicts only too well.

One of the latest instances of this instinctive revulsion we can call to mind is produced by a work called "Fanny," which we sincerely trust none of our readers have read, nor intend to. We dare only hint the imbroglio, which is that of a lover jealous of the husband, and finding just cause to be so; and we who have been compelled to read it as part of our daily duty, were forced more than once to lay the book down, so truthfully sickening were the descriptions.

This fancy of turning illicit love into money has not, to our knowledge, sunk deep into the feminine writers of France, but we have one magnificent specimen in herself worth a host. She has carried out the system successfully, and any time during the last twenty years it has been impossible to read one of her love stories and not feel that she had drawn herself as the heroine. We may be quite sure that she forgot to put the shadows in, but she was safe so long as she did not bear too harshly on the other party. For more years than she would like to own to, Madame Dudevant has been working herself up into the stock heroine, and, more marvellous still, time could not change nor custom pall her infinite variety. We had the same picture standing

forth prominently in her Memoirs which we could trace through hundreds of her love-tales, the passionate, self-sacrificing woman, whose only sin was that she loved too well.

Emboldened by past successes, Madame Sand unfortunately passed the Rubicon: in her desire to prove herself a spotless though much-injured woman, she assailed the memory of a dead man in "Elle et Lui," and has drawn down a terrible reprisal from the brother of the erring lover, whose character she had drawn in the darkest colours, to form a foil to her own immaculate purity. "Lui et Elle" soon appeared in reply to her attack, and the publication of some of her letters, which had been discreetly preserved for fear of such an assault as the present, knocked down at one fell blow the airy scaffolding on which her reputation, such as it was, was supported. There can be no harm in our alluding to the notorious fact that both books revolve round the same hero and heroine in the shape of Madame George Sand and Alfred de Musset, the poet. The lady's romance shall, as in duty bound, have precedence of the avenger's stern reality.

In "Elle et Lui," then, we have Mademoiselle Thérèse Jacques and M. Laurent de Fauvel, both artists, and, at the outset of the story, living on amicable terms of Platonism. The lady, in fact, is quite maternal, and reads the impetuous young man moral lectures about having due regard to his health, and not indulging too much in "*folles soirées.*" Laurent is not at all in love with Thérèse—how could a Frenchman entertain that passion

for a woman five years his senior?—and yet there is a Mr. Palmer, an American, who seems to spend more time in her company than is exactly right. Besides, there is altogether a mystery about Thérèse—no one knows who she is or where she came from—and so Laurent cannot help prowling round her garden, to see who it is prevents him passing his evenings as usual with his friend. He overhears her saying to a companion whom he cannot see, "What do I care? I have only one love on earth, and that is yourself!" Straightway the demon of jealousy seizes on him, and he soon produces a scene. The friends go through a grand weeping duet and, in his frenzy he proposes serious marriage to her. Thérèse shuts him up with the quiet word "Impossible!" and off he goes, slamming the door after him, and uttering more improprieties than become a lady's pen to write down.

Mr. Palmer intervenes as the *Deus ex machinâ*, and calms Laurent's jealousy by telling him Thérèse's life-history. It is certainly an instructive one: her mother made a mistake before marriage, and was compelled to keep it a secret from her husband; hence Thérèse had never known a mother's fostering love, for her husband had his suspicions aroused, and carried her off to Belgium. After a time Thérèse's real papa, a rich banker, took charge of her and gave her a splendid education, and at his house she formed Mr. Palmer's acquaintance, who was moved to love. Unfortunately, a noble young Portuguese stepped in and carried her off. Her father died, the money he left her was disputed,

and, on the top of her troubles, her husband's first wife came to dispute him too.

Thérèse gave him up at once to prevent a scandal, but he was not to be got rid of on such easy terms. He was continually coming back again like a bad shilling, and when he found that Thérèse was resolute, he determined on coercing her by carrying off her child. It strikes us that we have met with this situation before—but no matter. The child was taken to America, where it died, or was supposed to have died. Of course it did not, because its presence was required for the dénouement: but such things continually happen in romances.

Here was a pretty position for a respectable young woman, neither maid, wife, nor widow! and, worse than all, with nothing to live upon. Of course she indignantly refused the income her share of a husband offered her, and determined to live by art. Equally of course she had a tremendous talent, and set up her establishment in Paris, the only city where true art is appreciated. Here she soon became rich, respected, and respectable; not a shadow of a shade rested on her character; no young men were seen to enter her doors, till in a luckless hour Laurent came to destroy her felicity.

This revelation naturally destroyed all hopes Laurent had entertained about wedded bliss, and an English romancer would be probably puzzled how to get him out of the hobble. Not so the clever Frenchwoman: if they could not marry, they might at any rate be as good as married, and those little matters are common

enough in France. If every Madame Telle were compelled to show her marriage certificate as a passport to society, the salons of Bohemian Paris would soon be left desolate. Still, there is something suggestive in this facility with which a woman drops into such an anomalous position in Paris: in London, it is true, much the same sort of thing unhappily goes on, but it is very rare for a woman holding such a frail tenure of respectability to thrust herself into society which she instinctively feels herself beneath, but in Paris nothing is more usual.

We will spare our readers all the "Ohs!" and the "Ahs!" and the "Ciel, quel bonheur!" the languor of the soul, the tender fatigue, the "doux abandon" which are the obligato accompaniments of all French love scenes. We can comprise it all in one line: Laurent says to Thérèse, "Notre saint (! ! !) amour est indissoluble!" Still Madame Sand finds it necessary to offer some sort of apology for this "facilis descensus Averni," in the following insidious manner:—

"Rien n'est périlleux comme ces intimités ou l'où s'est promis de ne pas s'attaquer mutuellement, quand l'un des deux n'inspire pas à l'autre une secrète répulsion physique. Les artistes, en raison de leur vie indépendante et de leurs occupations, qui les obligent souvent d'abandonner le convenu social, sont plus exposés à ces dangers que ceux qui vivent dans le réglé et dans le positif. On doit donc leur pardonner des entraînements plus soudains et des impressions plus fiévreuses. L'opinion sent qu'elle le doit, car elle est généralement

plus indulgente pour ceux qui errent forcément que pour ceux que berce le calme plat. Et puis le monde exige des artistes le feu d'inspiration, et il faut bien que ce feu qui déborde pour les plaisirs et les enthousiasmes du public arrive à les consumer eux-mêmes."

The happy couple proceed to Italy to spend their honeymoon; but Thérèse, who will not be beholden to Laurent for any pecuniary aid, has made arrangements to copy Titians, &c., for publishers in the chief Italian towns. The consequence is, she is obliged to stay six weeks in Genoa, at which Laurent soon grows disgusted. He becomes tired of home after a day or two, and, consequently, of Thérèse.

So matters go on from bad to worse: Laurent takes advantage of Mr. Palmer's arrival to assume a convenient jealousy, which eventually leads to a rupture. The following is the language Madame Sand places in the mouth of the man who has made up his mind to a rupture, and it is so thoroughly feminine in its tone that we cannot refrain from quoting it:—

"Ma liberté morale est chose sacrée, et je ne permets à personne de s'en emparer. Je vous l'avais confiée et non donnée; c'était à vous d'en faire bon usage et de savoir me rendre heureux. Oh, n'essayez pas de dire que vous ne vouliez pas de moi! Je connais ces manéges de la modestie et ces évolutions de la conscience des femmes. Le jour où vous m'avez cédé, j'ai compris que vous pensiez bien m'avoir conquis, et que toutes ces feintes résistances, ces larmes de détresse, et ces pardons toujours accordés à mes prétensions n'étaient que l'art

vulgaire de tendre une ligne et d'y faire mordre le pauvre poisson ébloui par la mouche artificielle. Je vous ai trompée, Thérèse, en feignant d'être la dupe de cette mouche: c'était mon droit. Vous vouliez des adorations pour vous rendre, je vous les ai prodiguées sans efforts et sans hypocrisie; vous êtes belle, et je vous désirais! Mais une femme n'est qu'une femme, et la dernière de toutes vous donne autant de modestie que la plus grande reine. Vous avez eu la simplicité de l'ignorer, et à présent il faut rentrer en vous-même."

Setting aside the utter impossibility of any man addressing such insults to a woman who had made sacrifices to him, the vulgarity and coarseness defeat Madame Sand's purpose. It could not be that a man of poetic temperament would utter such language, and madame puts herself out of the Court of Love in her action against the memory of Alfred de Musset. We must, consequently, regard "Elle et Lui" as a work of fiction founded on a very slight basis of reality.

Of course Laurent goes to Florence, leaving Thérèse in Genoa; and what do our readers imagine she does next? As they never can guess, we will give them the solution at once. Mr. Palmer tells her that her husband is dead, and offers her his hand! He is certainly quite right in saying that he is a philosopher. No sooner has she consented to make him happy, than she receives the following billet—anything but doux—from Laurent: "J'ai joué, j'ai perdu; j'ai eu une maîtresse, elle m'a trompé—je l'ai tuée. J'ai pris du poison. Je me meurs. Adieu, Thérèse!"

Of course, carrying out his character of philosopher, Palmer insists on his affianced going to the relief of the old lover, and accompanies her. Laurent was mad, but had committed none of the atrocities of which he had accused himself. Thérèse and Palmer nurse him into convalescence, and it was decided that he should return to France. Philosophic Palmer orders Thérèse to accompany him to Spezzia, where he will come and join her. In vain, however, does Laurent try to persuade her to come with him to Paris; she thrusts all her money on his man-servant, is herself landed on the island of Porto Venere, where she sets to work at lace-netting, to obtain a livelihood, till money could reach her from Paris. Here Palmer joins her, but having dared to display a little jealousy—unpardonable in a philosopher—she defers the marriage.

At length the happy couple make up their disputes, and it is agreed that they shall proceed together to America, to be married under the nuptial benediction of Palmer's mamma. When all preparations are made, Thérèse's unlucky mother turns up, and begs to see her child once more, ere she loses her for ever. Of course Thérèse obeys, and they proceed to Paris, much to Palmer's disgust. When Thérèse reached her home, by a fortuitous concurrence Laurent happened to be in the house, surveying the scenes of past happiness, as repentant lovers are so fond of doing in novels, and Palmer turns jealous again. At last, Palmer does the only sensible act of his novelistic life: feeling convinced that Thérèse really loves Laurent still, he disappears, and leaves her to her renewed happiness.

The couple come together again, and the old story is recommenced. After a time, Laurent introduces the dagger which plays so prominent a part in all Madame Sand's stories, and Thérèse is quite resigned for death. Then he insults her again by sending her a domino and a ticket for the masqued ball at the Opera, and, of course, she goes to hear herself insulted by Laurent's female companions.

All at once the long-lost child turns up: Thérèse hears her bell rung thrice, and, on opening the door, finds a boy, aged ten, standing there. Mr. Palmer had brought him and left him there; he had discovered the story of Thérèse's child being dead to be a falsehood, and had brought him to her as a consolation. In his pocket was a portfolio containing a large fortune. Mr. Palmer was not the man to do things by halves. Thérèse makes up her mind to fly Paris and Laurent, for "elle était mère, et la mère avait irrévocablement tué l'amante."

Such is an outline of the very charming romance in which Madame Sand bespatters the character of a dead lover, and we now come to the other side of the story, as given in "Lui et Elle," which certainly possesses many internal evidences of truth.

We have here the hero and heroine in Edouard de Falconey and Madame Olympe de B., both distinguished musicians, the latter signing herself William Caze. At the outset we find the lady anxious to get rid of her old lover, Jean Cazeau (Jules Sandeau), and writing him letters to prepare the inevitable separation. These letters are given by M. Paul de Musset, and are

decidedly original, especially when the lady says, "L'ardeur de votre âge, l'emportement de votre passion, vous ont empêché de comprendre la chasteté de ma tendresse, la maternité de mon amour." To compel him to depart, she goes to his lodgings in male clothes, and packs his trunk for him; but, after he is safely under weigh, she returns to his room, breaks open his secrétaire, and secures all the letters she had written him during the glow of her passion. These matters satisfactorily settled, she looks around for fresh fields and pastures new.

She has not to search long. At a dinner given by their mutual publisher, Olympe meets Edouard de Falconey, and they are attracted towards each other. The young man (whose character is very gracefully drawn by his brother) will not listen to the advice given him by his friend Pierre, an artist, who warns him against the fascinating ways of the bronze-coloured beauty, but soon writes her a letter brimful of admiration, to which she responds in a very Bohemian fashion. Before long the alliance is declared, much to the disgust of the friends of William Caze, who have been hitherto accustomed to turn the lady's rooms into an amateur cabaret. Her best friend is a gentleman universally named Caliban, and it is easy to distinguish through the thin disguise Gustave Planche, the distinguished critic. Here is another capital descriptive bit. Prior to sending his declaration to Olympe, Edouard consults his friend Pierre on the subject. After reading the billet, the latter replies:—

"Tu peux achever ce billet-doux et l'envoyer: je n'y vois pas d'inconvénient. On te répondra, 'Enfant que vous êtes! j'ai huit ans de plus que vous!' et l'on t'offrira la chaste sympathie et la sainte amitié, refrain obligé de la chanson; jusqu'au jour où l'on consentira par charité, par pure bonté d'âme, à devenir ta maîtresse pour t'empêcher de souffrir: en sorte que l'amour se présentera orné de tous les charmes d'un médicament ou d'un régime hygiénique."

Unfortunately for Edouard, prior to his acquaintance with Olympe, he had ventured to make some alterations in his copy of her score of "Les Chansons Créoles," and she noticed them on visiting his room. Pierre was convinced that William Caze's vanity had from that day received a severe blow. Not that she evidenced it, however; she was still full of tenderness, and was delighted when Edouard proposed to her a tour through Italy.

The first quarrel between the couple took place at Genoa. They were visited by two young Italian gentlemen, whose acquaintance they had formed on board the steamer, and the conversation naturally turned on the defence of Genoa by Massena, and the second Italian campaign. Olympe mentioned that, at the period they were speaking of, her mother accompanied to the army a general officer, from whom her father carried her off and married her, and that her own birth had been such a prompt result of their union, that the marriage ceremony only preceded her appearance in the world by a month. Edouard, passably disgusted by this abominable revelation, tried to change the conversation, but

Olympe turned to him deliberately, and said, "Trouvez bon, mon cher, que je parle de mes proches et de moi-même comme je l'entends. Je ne fais pas la guerre à vos préjugés de gentilhommerie; mais je ne puis pousser la complaisance jusqu'à m'exprimer comme si je les partageais. Ma mère était une femme forte, et parce qu'elle obéissait au vœu de la nature, à son cœur, à son caprice, si vous voulez, je la tiens pour égale en mérite, sinon pour supérieure, aux filles bien élevées, dociles et hypocrites, de votre caste." It was with some difficulty that Edouard made her understand that a daughter has no right to imperil her mother's reputation for the sake of supporting a thesis; but "a woman convinced against her will is of the same opinion still," as Madame Sand has sufficiently proved in her Memoirs.

After this quarrel Genoa appeared odious to Edouard, and they went on to Florence.

Here another quarrel took place in a very curious way: Edouard had gone to the Palazzo Pitti, and could have sworn he saw Olympe pass on the arm of a young man. He taxed her with it when she came home, but she declared she had only been to a jeweller's to purchase a ring as a present for him. Edouard was satisfied, but at the theatre the same young man bowed to Olympe, who returned his salutation. Edouard again taxed her, when she stated it was the jeweller's son. Edouard innocently addressed him at the buffet, and was soon undeceived. The gentleman was a Count Miretti, who had formed the lady's acquaintance at the Palazzo Pitti during the morning. Of course, this deception produced

another scene; but Olympe cleverly turned it off by saying she had acted thus on purpose to give him a warning against forming unfounded suspicions. Edouard was happy again, and they went on to Naples.

Here the young man was attacked by a violent brain fever, and a doctor was sent for: he was old and nervous, and did not dare to bleed Edouard. He promised to send a younger man, and when the latter arrived (a very handsome fellow, by the way), Olympe rushed into his arms, shrieking, "Save him!" In spite of his illness, Falconey, astonished at this pathetic outbreak, muttered to himself, "Why on earth did she not embrace the old man?"

After a few weeks' oblivion Edouard returned to his senses, but was far too weak to lift a hand. He saw the young Dr. Palmeriello and Olympe seated by his bedside, and eagerly talking; then his senses deserted him for a time again. When he recovered, he was astounded at a sudden revelation of Olympe's perfidy, which he afterwards described to Pierre in the following terms:—

"Ce fut alors que j'aperçus un tableau que j'aurai pris moi-même pour une vision de malade, si d'autres preuves et les aveux les plus complets n'eussent changé mes soupçons en certitude. En face de moi, sur le mur de la chambre, je vis deux grandes ombres projetées par la lueur de bougies, qui se trouvaient alignées de façon à ne fournir qu'un foyer de lumière. Ces deux ombres représentaient une femme assise sur les genoux d'un homme, et comme renversée, la tête en arrière. Je

n'eus pas la force de soulever mes paupières pour voir le haut de ce groupe, où la tête de l'homme devait se trouver, mais cette tête que je cherchais vint d'elle-même se poser dans mon rayon visuel. Elle s'approcha de celle de la femme, et l'attitude des deux ombres était celle d'un baiser. J'avoue que, dans le premier moment, ce tableau ne fit pas une vive impression sur mon esprit engourdi. Il me fallut quelque temps pour comprendre la portée d'une telle révélation; mais bientôt j'arrivai par degrès à l'étonnement, à l'indignation et à l'horreur."

But this was not all. Olympe invited the young doctor to sup with her, and Edouard overheard them arranging pleasure-trips they were going to make together. They evidently thought him dead, for Palmeriello said: "Se non è morto, poco manca." By the time Edouard had regained a little strength, he taxed Olympe with her treachery, but she declared it was a fever fantasy. Subsequent events, however, turned suspicion into certainty, and then the hardened woman threatened to confine him in a madhouse, if he dared to breathe a syllable on the subject. Edouard was only too glad to escape from such a fury, and returned to Paris, broken-hearted. The shock had been too great for his enfeebled frame, and, worse still, he yet felt an ardent passion for the fallen woman.

Not long, and Olympe also came to Paris, with the young doctor in her train. She felt convinced that Edouard had told his story, and she therefore determined to brave public opinion. A trial of strength then ensued between Olympe and her old lover, in which Olympe

was defeated, and in her rage she dismissed the doctor, who returned to his nothingness, cursing the hour in which he had yielded to the syren.

Thus disarmed, Olympe made an attack on Edouard, pleading her faults and praying his forgiveness. She declared that she would kill herself, go into a convent, cut off her hair and send it to him, if he did not relent. Edouard, however, remained firm, and she was as good as her word. One evening, when seated at his piano, he received a parcel: on opening it, he found it contained Olympe's beautiful tresses. Then she changed her batteries: she began writing him the most frenzied letters, which M. de Musset cruelly immortalizes, and from which we will quote a passage, illustrative of the grande passion as felt, or at least described, by Madame Sand in her stormy youth:—

"L'heure de ma mort est en train de sonner. Chaque jour qui s'écoule frappe un coup, et dans quatre jours le dernier coup ébranlera l'air vital autour de moi. Alors, s'ouvrira une tombe, où ma jeunesse et mes amours descendront pour jamais: et que serai-je ensuite? Triste spectre, sur quelles rives iras-tu errer et gémir? Grèves immenses! hiver sans fin! Il faut plus de courage pour franchir le seuil des passions et pour entrer dans le calme du désespoir que pour avaler la ciguë. . . . . .

"Pourquoi m'avez-vous réveillée, mon Dieu, quand je m'étendais avec résignation sur une couche glacée? Pourquoi avez-vous fait passer devant moi le fantôme de mes nuits brûlantes? Ange de mort, amour funeste, ô mon destin, sous la figure d'un enfant blonde et délicat,

oh! que je t'aime encore! Quel est-ce feu qui dévore mes entrailles? Il semble qu'un volcan gronde au-dedans de moi et que je vais éclater comme un cratère. O Dieu! prends donc pitié de cet être qui souffre tant! Pourquoi les autres meurent-ils? Ne pourrai-je succomber sous le fardeau de ma douleur?"

Tall language this, as the Americans would say—so tall that we could not dare to translate it, for fear of rendering it worse nonsense than it is in the original. The English language cannot attain such an altitude of bombast. We leave it to our readers to make any sense of it.

Still Edouard remained stern: for at the very time Olympe was sending him these despairing effusions, it was the current rumour that the fickle Ariadne was consoling herself by the society of a German musician, Hans Flöcken (Chopin). Piqued by Edouard's obduracy, the lady tried one supreme effort: she called up Pierre one night, confessed all her faults to him, and implored his intercession with Edouard. She only wanted to see him once more and be assured of his forgiveness: then she would die happy. Edouard at length weakly consented, and the result was a revival of the old liaison and a condonation of all that was passed.

But it did not last long: Edouard had again causes for jealousy. Hans Flocken wrote, asking an interview; and though Olympe assured him she had not answered the letter, Edouard was certain that she had. Then another male friend wrote, seeking consolation, and the reply was shown to Edouard. He noticed in it these

words: "Chasteté et sainte amitié," which Olympe was very fond of using, and he remarked on it thus: "Ma chère, vous parlez si souvent de chasteté que cela devient indécent. Votre amitié n'est pas plus sainte que celle des autres." This retort sent Olympe into a furious passion, and she threatened to stab Edouard, who laughingly disarmed her.

Before long they separated again, and though Olympe did her utmost to lure him back, Edouard was firm. A curious incident quite extinguished the last spark of love. Meeting Olympe one afternoon, she so earnestly begged him to come and dine with her, that he consented, for fear of causing her pain; but when they reached the door, she said, with unusual hesitation, that she hoped he would have no objection to meet a friend she had already invited—Hans Flöcken. Edouard burst into a loud laugh, and quitted her for ever.

Twenty years later, Edouard was lying on a bed of sickness, Pierre reading to him the paper. On coming to the name of William Caze, Edouard remarked:—

"'Voilà celle qui m'a empoissonné. Je suis comme ces gens qui avaient dîne une fois chez les Borgias ou les Médicis et ne se remettaient jamais.'

"'N'éxagerons point,' dit Pierre, 'examinez les choses en philosophe. Il y a, selon moi, des circonstances atténuantes.'

"'Ah!' s'écria Falconey, 'je suis curieux de voir cela.'

"'Si l'on y regardait bien,' reprit Pierre, 'on trouverait peut-être dans les facultés et le talent du maestro

l'excuse de la femme. William Caze, obligée par son art à faire parler les passions, éprouve un ardent besoin de les connaître, d'en écouter le langage, de les voir de prés, d'observer dans le cœur des autres toutes celles qu'elle est incapable à sentir. De là cet appétit déréglé de complications, d'aventures, de changements, d'amours interrompues, reprises, abandonées. Le calm et le bonheur, si doux qu'ils soient, ne lui enseignent plus rien après certain temps : de là le désir de rompre, de passer à autre chose. La femme aimerait encore volontiers : mais le compositeur s'impatiente et dit, 'Assez d'amour, nous savons cela par cœur ; occupons-nous un peu de jalousie, de désespoir, de tromperie, d'infidélité.' C'est ainsi qu'elle trompe et devient infidèle."

The apology is ingenious, and, we dare say, true ; still it did not justify Olympe in destroying the reputation of those she had loved, and, when all was over, describing one as a madman, another as an imbecile, a third as a man without delicacy. Aware of this amiable weakness on the part of the lady, Edouard, before his death, drew up the narrative we have analysed, and handed it to Pierre with the letters he had fortunately preserved. Pierre solemnly promised his dying friend, that if the day came when (to use Edouard's words) "elle avait l'audace de mentir à Dieu et aux hommes jusqu'à dire que j'ai été un ingrat, un fou et un méchant, quand c'est elle qui m'a trahi, enlevé la raison et empoisonné le cœur —arrive alors, comme la statue du Commandeur au souper de Don Juan."

The day has arrived : Olympe has charged her lover

with being all this, and worse; but Pierre has kept his word. Never has a more frightful revelation of woman's perfidy been laid bare than that presented us in "Lui et Elle."

It may be that there is a degree of harshness in thus dissecting a woman's heart, and showing what terrible thoughts it can treasure up for so long a time, but it must be confessed that George Sand courted the reprisal. She wrote a book to blacken the character of a dead man, and his brother has come to the rescue. That "Lui et Elle" is in every respect true, there cannot be a shadow of a doubt; and at the same time it is equally certain that "Elle et Lui" is a tissue of falsehoods, strung together with most malicious design. If this severe lesson produce the proper effect, and Madame Sand be induced, through fear of further reprisals, to refrain from drawing other pictures from her own life-history, we shall be only too glad. But we fear it has arrived too late. Were a new edition of Madame Sand's works to be published, they might justly be collected under the title of "Elle et Eux," for the system of revelation of past amours has become a monomania with her.

CHAPTER X.

HONORÉ DE BALZAC.

IN those fabulous times when men and wild beasts stood on a more familiar footing to each other than is the case in our degenerate days, a mighty hunter once showed a lion a picture of the monarch of the desert being maltreated by his two-legged opponent. "Ah!" replied the lion, sagely applying his claw to his nose, "but suppose the lion had painted the picture?" This apologue appears to us specially applicable to the relations subsisting between author and publisher; we have heard the one side of the story *usque ad nauseam;* but the publisher has hitherto maintained silence. Authors may hiss, but he consoles himself by reckoning up the money safely stowed away in his chest. At length, however, this rule has been broken by M. Edmond Werdet,* who has produced a very amusing and characteristic book about the great French author to whose *lâches* he owed his ruin. Before analysing it, we will first show how the connexion commenced between Balzac and Werdet. The latter was engaged as commercial traveller to a publishing house,

* Portrait intime de Balzac, sa Vie, son Humeur, et son Caractère. Par Edmond Werdet, son ancien libraire-éditeur. Paris: E. Dentu.

and thus was commissioned to make an offer to the rising young author for a new book. So large was its sale that M. Werdet determined on turning publisher and making his fortune by subsidising the "future marshal of French literature." He had but modest resources at his command—just one hundred and twenty pounds—to commence the campaign, but he was young and hopeful. He made the offer to De Balzac, who laughed at him, and he quitted his presence in disgust. In less than a fortnight, however, the author was in want of money, and recommenced negotiations, which ended in Werdet's purchasing the reprint of "Le Médecin de Campagne," for which he paid his entire capital. But this was not all: Werdet determined on becoming exclusive publisher of Balzac's works, and there was some difficulty in getting them together, for the author had no less than six publishers—probably on the principle of the bankrupt, who had half a dozen banking accounts that he might overdraw them all. At last, however, M. Werdet succeeded in carrying out his design, and for seven years he enjoyed the ruinous honour of being Balzac's banker and publisher. At length, when he was obliged to confess himself ruined, owing to Balzac's delay in sending in copy, the author coolly turned on his heel, saying that *his* publisher must be a millionnaire, and resold the copyrights at an advance to another enterprising publisher, leaving to M. Werdet the glory of having been his sole publisher, and the costly honour of his intimacy. In the present volume, M. Werdet, then, gives an animated account of

their connexion, and from it we shall be enabled to draw up a description of one of the greatest novelists France has yet possessed.

Honoré de Balzac was born at Tours on the 16th of May, 1799. His father had been saved from the guillotine in 1793, by being appointed commissary to the army of the north; in 1797, he married the daughter of one of his colleagues, and retired to Tours, where he enjoyed an easy competency. At the age of seven, young Honoré was sent to the College de Vendôme, then conducted by the Oratorians, where he remained seven long years without a single holiday. At the expiration of this time, the lad was attacked by a species of *coma*, and his father bore him home to be cured. Soon after, the family removed to Paris, where the father had been appointed commissary-general to the first division, and Honoré, having recovered his health, was placed at a private school in the Marais, being the despair of his master by his inattention and carelessness. At the age of eighteen he took his bachelor's degree, and was received as avocat when twenty. In obedience to his father's wishes he entered as clerk in the office of Guyonnet de Merville, where he met with Eugène Scribe and Jules Janin, both equally disgusted with their profession; and the result was that Honoré refused all the excellent offers of partnership, and decided on becoming a literary man. This decision could not have been arrived at during a worse moment, for his father had been superseded, and had lost a heavy amount by bad speculations; but nothing would move

the young man from his determination. He occupied the traditional garret, receiving an allowance of five pounds a month, and had a fine prospect of starvation before him. Of course, he began with a tragedy, on the subject of Cromwell, which was read in family council in 1825, and Andrieux, a literary authority, asserted that it did not contain the slightest trace of talent. But the young man would not own defeat; "Cromwell" was consigned to the flames, and he began writing a romance; but even at the outset his fatal habit of indecision was predominant:

"It was the period when the 'Manuels Roret' were creating an intense excitement. Young Balzac, in a toilet which required renovation from head to foot, went one day to Levavasseur, the publisher, with the idea of a work, to be called 'Manuel de l'Homme d'Affaires' The idea was accepted, and the author received on account two hundred francs, on promise of delivering the copy a month later. Of course he did not keep his word, and at length Levavasseur went to look up the author. The latter, to pacify his severe creditor, offered to read him some passages from a romance he was then writing. The proposition was accepted, and the publisher was so struck by the originality of the novel, that he said, 'I will buy your MS. for two thousand francs, and annul the bargain for the Manuel. Come with me, and I will give you one thousand francs on account, and you shall receive the other eight hundred francs the day the MS. is delivered in. Does that suit you?' Balzac gladly accepted, and, although the MS. was delayed

a very long time, Levavasseur at last published, in 1829, 'La Physiologie du Mariage,' which produced an enormous sensation. From that day literature counted a master—France a new Molière."

But before the new author woke up one morning to find himself famous, he had many a bitter ordeal to undergo. Pressed by his family to undertake some respectable enterprise, he had accepted the money a friend advanced, and started as publisher of one-volumed editions of the French Classics. On the failure of this scheme he determined on becoming a printer in partnership with Barbier, neither of them knowing anything of the business. Very naturally they soon raised a flourishing crop of bad debts. Balzac was just on the verge of bankruptcy, when his mother came forward with fifty thousand francs and saved him. Then his resolve was fixed: as printing had robbed him of a fortune, he must recover it from the same source; he buckled resolutely to work, and by the year 1831 he had attained the position he coveted. It was at this period that his connexion with Werdet commenced, who Balzac glowingly expected would become the Constable of the French Walter Scott. The publisher then speedily found that he was not on a bed of roses. Balzac was constantly in hot water: the patrician *de* was openly carped against, and Balzac was very proud of his family scutcheon, more so perhaps than his literary renown, although he was wont to say, "There are only three men in France who can write our language: myself, Théophile Gautier, and Victor Hugo." Of

his former foible, Philarète Chasles supplies a suggestive anecdote :—

"After the appearance of M. de Custine's work on Russia, it was stated that the emperor had expressed an earnest desire to secure the services of a French pen capable of refuting the calumnies of the marquis. De Balzac, if we may believe the *Augsburg Gazette*, took post for St. Petersburg, and on arriving there, addressed to the emperor a letter drawn up as follows: 'M. de Balzac the writer and M. de Balzac the gentleman solicit from his majesty the favour of a private audience.' The next day, according to the same *Gazette*, an equerry of the emperor brought De Balzac the following reply in his majesty's own handwriting: 'M. de Balzac the gentleman, and M. de Balzac the writer can take the post as soon as they please;' whereupon De Balzac started home again."

Another evil from which the publisher suffered was the sudden caprices which De Balzac would take. Thus, when copy was earnestly wanted to save the credit of the house, nothing would satisfy him but going straight to Vienna, where he promised to write like a tiger. Needless to add, that the publisher had to advance the funds. Three weeks later he received a letter from De Balzac that he was hard at work, and terminating with a postscript that he had drawn on him at sight for fifteen hundred francs on Rothschild. When the author at length returned at the expiration of a month, he did not bring a line of MS. with him. A curious anecdote connected with the journey is worth quotation. It

was told our publisher by Auguste, the great man's valet:—

"'I was much embarrassed at each relay to pay the German postboys. I did not know a word of the language, but my master supplied a plan. He gave me a little bag of silver groschen, and on arriving at the post-house the boy would come to the carriage door. I looked attentively between his two eyes, and put in his hand a groschen, then another and another, till I saw him smile. Then I saw I had given him a piece too much. I took it back quickly, and the man was paid.'"

In 1835, De Balzac hit on the magnificent idea of being chief editor of a grand literary and critical review which should surpass all others, and for this purpose induced Werdet to buy for him the *Chronique de Paris*. The first authors in Paris joined him, as will be found from the following extract:—

"Here are the names of the contributors: De Balzac, editor-in-chief, especially charged with foreign politics; Jules Sandeau, theatres; Emile R——, light literature; Gustave Planche (whom I gained for the *Chronique* by paying his debts, and buying him decent clothes), serious critiques; Jacques de Chaudes-Aigues, light criticism, under the orders of his master, Gustave Planche; Ramond Brucker, novels and romances; Alphonse Karr, squibs and epigrams. Théophile Gautier published in it a 'Tour in Belgium,' 'La Mort Amoureuse,' and 'La Chaine d'Or;' and, lastly, Charles de Bernard wrote for it 'La Femme de Quarante Ans,' and 'La Rose Jaune.'"

The *Chronique* appeared every Thursday and Sunday, and on the previous day the contributors always dined with Werdet, in which they never failed, even if they forget their copy. By midnight, however, they would have grown sufficiently sober for serious work, and began writing in a cloud of tobacco, which De Balzac detested, saying that nothing good could come from the brain of a man given to that custom. We can easily foresee the only result of such a system, and although the prestige of De Balzac's name sent up the circulation for a time, his habits of idleness soon gained the upper hand. The review went down very fast, and the editor was glad to dispose of it at last at a considerable loss. There were three great peculiarities about De Balzac, which furnished never-ending topics for jests: these were his hair, his mania for nobility, and lastly, his jewelled cane. The origin of the latter, and the mysterious rumours spread about its value, justify us in examining more closely into its origin. In the first place, it must be borne in mind that De Balzac received more than eleven thousand letters from lady admirers, and very many valuable presents, only due to the chivalrous author who so nobly championed the "femme de trente ans." It must also not be forgotten that De Balzac had an intense aversion for serving in the Garde Nationale, and Marshal Lobau was very strict in calling out all the soldiers in their turn. Numberless were the evasions to which De Balzac had recourse, until one fatal day a refractory sergeant got hold of him, and locked him up in the Hôtel des

Haricots for forty-eight hours. In his despair he sent off for Werdet, who was to be sure and come to dinner, and not forget some money. A splendid repast was sent in from Véfour's, and laid in the refectory, where they noticed, to their surprise, a still more magnificent cover for one person: this belonged to Eugène Sue, who soon made his appearance. De Balzac wanted him to join in his repast, but Sue declined, for his people had come expressly to wait on him. This simple incident quite destroyed Balzac's good spirits, and the sight of the white-gloved domestics was most indigestible. De Balzac was evidently defeated on his own field. The next day, when Werdet arrived at the prison, he found De Balzac's room completely crowded with good things, sent in by his admirers. No temptation would induce De Balzac to return to the refectory and meet Sue: he was disgusted with his aristocratic airs and pretensions, which harmonized so ill with his plebeian name. So the word was passed to all his allies to visit the prisoner in his cell, and help to demolish the dainty cates. During the dinner a parcel was brought in for the host, which, on opening, was found to contain a tress of hair, passed through an emerald ring of great value. A piece of paper, accompanying it, bore the motto, "An unknown friend." All at once an idea struck Balzac: it was impossible for him to do justice to all the presents he received; he, therefore, determined to pick out the handsomest stones, and send them to Gosselin, to be mounted as the knob of a cane. This was done; and such was the origin of the historic cane.

But while De Balzac was the lion of Parisian society, and courted by all the beauty of the capital, he did not neglect his work. Whenever the "furia" assailed him, he shut himself up in his study, and worked tremendously hard. No one was allowed to approach him. All the letters that arrived were collected in a china vase, and not opened till the fit for writing had passed off. The curtains were drawn, the shutters closed, four wax tapers, in silver candlesticks, were lighted, and De Balzac wrote indefatigably at a small table. His dress was most curious, as our author describes it:—

"He was always attired in the white gown of a Dominican, made of cachemere in summer, of fine wool in winter, his legs free in their movements, encased in wide white trousers, his feet elegantly covered by red morocco slippers, richly embroidered with gold, and a long Venetian chain fastened round his waist, from which hung a golden paper-knife and a pair of scissors of the same metal. At eight in the evening, after a light repast, he usually retired to bed, and returned to his modest table at two in the morning. Until six his light and rapid crowquill-pen flew over the paper, and was the only sound to break the solemn silence. Then he took a bath, in which he remained an hour, plunged in meditation. At eight o'clock Auguste brought him a cup of coffee, which he swallowed without sugar. From eight till nine I was admitted, to bring him proofs or tear from him some copy; the labour of composing then began again with the same ardour until mid-day. Then he breakfasted on plain boiled eggs, and ter-

minated this temperate repast by another cup of coffee, still without sugar. From one to six, labour—incessant labour; then he took a very light dinner, to which he drank a wine-glass of Vouvray, a wine he liked much, and which brightened him up. From seven to eight I was again admitted to his presence. Thus De Balzac lived and worked. After six weeks or two months of this cenobitic life, he would be seen abroad again, with his features pale and fearfully sunken. He, however, soon recovered, thanks to his marvellous constitution, and re-entered the world to collect fresh colours for his palette, and hum from flower to flower like a bee."

Now and then, in his study of character and strange search for quaint names, which he assiduously collected from signs, he would invite M. Werdet to accompany him through the lower parts of the Cité, and have a regular day's debauch, in which the publisher paid the piper. On one occasion Balzac invited him to dine with him at Véry's after a long day's research. This was the bill of fare which De Balzac conscientiously selected and devoured for himself, as his companion was suffering from a bilious attack: one hundred Ostend oysters; twelve cutlets, with parsley au naturel; a duck and turnips; a brace of roast partridges; a sole à la Normande; without counting the hors d'œuvre and dessert, all washed down by the finest wines. When dinner was over, De Balzac asked the publisher for money, but, unfortunately, he had only forty francs, and besides, had been invited to dinner. Of course that was not enough for the author, so he only accepted five francs, which

were passed him under the table, and then called loudly for the bill. When it arrived, he took out his pencil and wrote a few words at the bottom; then, handing it with the five francs to the waiter, he told him to give it to the dame de comptoir from M. Honoré de Balzac. M. Werdet, naturally curious about this new way to pay a debt, inquired what was the meaning of it all when they reached the Palais Royal gardens, but De Balzac merely told him he would find out to-morrow. All at once, they met two friends, and De Balzac insisted on Werdet producing some money for one of them to play with. Twenty francs were soon lost, while De Balzac was entering into a profound calculation of how he would spend the money when the bank was broken. Then De Balzac went and borrowed forty francs of his heraldic engraver, which followed the others, and the author, finding luck was against him, all at once decided on going to the Funambules. Here, however, he became so excited that the *titis* insisted on his being turned out, and the party only saved themselves by a precipitate retreat. Last of all, they went to Balzac's and drank tea, when he entered into a profound explanation of his infallible system to break every bank. The next morning M. Werdet received an explanation of the dinner and its consequences. First, he was handed a bill from Véry's for sixty-two francs, then an order from the engraver for forty francs; altogether, the day's debauch cost him about one hundred and fifty francs. But that was little enough for the honour of having been in De Balzac's company a whole day.

The jewelled cane led to many expenses; of course the author could not go on foot with such a superb ornament, so he hired a *coupé* at twenty pounds a month. His liveries were splendid: he kept a coachman nearly as majestic as him who drove the British ambassador, and a groom as modest in his proportions as General Tom Thumb; he had his box at the Opera and at the Italiens, and assumed his proper place among the lions of the day. At times, too, the cane would be mislaid, and then De Balzac suffered agonies. Nothing would satisfy him until it was regained, and everybody of his acquaintance was sent off in search of the inestimable plaything which formed so integral a part of the admired author. Strange to say, however, that while De Balzac affected a fairy-like luxury in his home, and went the most extravagant lengths to gratify his sensual fancies, which formed a portion of his existence, he was frequently utterly neglectful of his own appearance. Here is a curious instance:—

'I returned with him one day from the Chaillot in a hired cab. As usual, he was dressed—although it was winter—in a brown paletot, well worn, and which had done good service. A cravat of red merino was twisted like a cord round his neck. Wide trousers, of a dark colour, scarcely came down to his ankles, exposing coarse stockings of black wool, and clumsy shoes tied with pieces of string. His hat, now very brown on the brim, did not appear to have been brushed since the day he bought it. When De Balzac had left the cab, I turned to my driver, and asked him, 'Can you guess who that

was?' 'Why, bourgeois, that is as clear as day,' replied my numbered Automedon; 'who else could it be but a drover of Poissy?'"

The Wandering Jew, we are told on the best authority, always had five sous in his pocket, but De Balzac had never more than two, which Auguste always took care to provide, for in those days you had to pay to pass over some of the bridges. During the time our author enjoyed his acquaintance, De Balzac only had three servants—Rose, Auguste, and his groom Grain de Mil. Auguste, his valet de chambre and factotum, was a young man of about twenty, very short, most discreet, and dumb as a valet ought to be. He adored his master, who was less a master to him than friend; but in 1840 he left him for some unexplained reason, and became clerk in a linendraper's. Rose, usually known by the name of "*la grande Nanon*," was a perfect *cordon-bleu*, and her only cause of unhappiness was when her master would not eat her nice dishes. Often and often would she tickle his olfactory nerves by a dainty *consommé*, which her master would rudely repulse; then she would cry, and declare that she would leave Mossieu, as her talent was rusting through his neglect, and at last, from sheer compassion, he would swallow the *consommé*, bidding her not to let that happen again. As for the microscopic groom, he died, in 1837, in Rose's arms, and during the whole of his illness De Balzac never failed to visit him every day.

M. Werdet estimates that up to the period of their

rupture in 1838, De Balzac had drawn more than 450,000-francs from his works. This without taking into account all he received up to the date of his death. Strangely enough, he never lost a single penny by one of his publishers. Money exerted an irresistible attraction over him—not as money, for he was not greedy of it, but as the representative of a luxury which he loved almost to madness. We have already alluded to the magnificence he displayed in his apartments. The description M. Werdet gives of his rooms in the Rue Cassini will show that we have not exaggerated:—

"The gallery led into a small salon, lighted by a large window; from this room you passed into the author's study. On one side was the bedroom, on the other was the dining-room, from which a private staircase led to the kitchen. I will now describe, with the accuracy of a broker, two rooms—the study and the bath-room; that will suffice to make known how the other rooms would be furnished. Under a curtain, between the window and the wall of the salon, was a small secret door opening into the bath-room, whose walls, covered with white stucco, and bath of white marble, received light from a window in the roof, of which the panes were pink, and diffused a rosy hue over the room. Two high-backed red morocco chairs were the sole furniture of this elegant bath-room, which was quite worthy of a pretty woman. Hence we reach his sleeping apartment, which quite dazzled the visitor. It was furnished with that taste, richness, and sumptuousness, so white and pink, so perfumed with the rarest

flowers, so glistening with gold, that it would have been an admirable nuptial chamber for a duchess of fifteen. The study was furnished, on the other hand, with marked simplicity; the floor was covered with soft carpeting of black and blue; a handsome ebony book-case with glass doors occupied all one side of the wall. This splendid piece of furniture contained a selection of rare and precious books, bound splendidly in red morocco, and bearing on the back and sides the arms of the Entragues. All the French classics were there, a few Latin authors, and a very few volumes of the most celebrated modern writers. There was also a very curious collection of all those authors who, like Swedenborg (of whom De Balzac was a passionate admirer), had written about mysticism, secret sciences, and the religious faith of nations. On a bracket opposite the bookcase was a plaster statue of Napoleon I., presented to De Balzac by one of the competitors for the statue on the Vendôme column. To the hilt of the sword was attached a small piece of paper, on which the author had written in his minute characters, 'Ce qu'il n'a pu achever par l'épée, je l'accomplirai par la plume.—HONORÉ DE BALZAC.' On the chimney was a glass of average height, with a pendule, and a couple of Sèvres vases. All over it were spread strange trifles, exclusively feminine: here a crumpled glove, which seemed to have belonged to a child; there a little satin slipper, too dainty even for an Andalusian marchioness; further on, a small iron key, quite rusted. When I asked De Balzac about it one day, he replied that it was his talisman, and that he

attached great value to it. The rest of the furniture in this gloomy and peaceful retreat was a large fauteuil covered with red morocco, a modest writing-table with a plain green cloth, and four high-backed ebony chairs covered with brown damask."

So great was our author's horror of being again arrested for not serving in the Garde Nationale, that he determined on never again having a local habitation, or even a name. He kept on his house in the Rue Cassini, putting up a bill for lodgings to let, and his friends received a password, which was changed weekly. Then he hired a house at Chaillot under the name of Madame Brunet, which he furnished with the most astounding luxury. Thence he was driven by the indefatigable sergeant, who sent him a note through the post, addressed to "M. de Balzac, *dit* Mme. Veuve Brunet, homme de lettres, Chasseur de la 1er Légion," &c. He had made up his mind not to serve, and consequently built at Jardies a splendid villa, which was the subject of Jules Janin's jokes. "I am glad to hear it," said the talented critic. "I am certain the villa will be for sale within a year, and I will buy it." His last abode was in the Allée Fortunée, now known as the Allée de Balzac, which was superbly fitted up, although the author was quite ruined. But then he had a faith in his good fortune, as will be seen from the following anecdote, supplied by Amédée Rolland:—

"De Balzac's fixed idea during his whole life was to gain millions. His ambition was to rival in luxury MM. Alexandre Dumas and Lamartine, who, prior to

the Revolution of 1848, were the two most luxurious authors in the world. To gain those millions he would have gone to China; and he wanted his friend Laurent-Jan to go with him to the Grand Mogul, asserting that he would give him tons of gold in exchange for a ring De Balzac possessed, and which descended in a straight line from Mahomet. He woke the poor fellow at three in the morning to impart this noble project, and insisted on setting off at once in a postchaise—of course, at the expense of the emperor. He was seriously angry with Laurent-Jan for twelve hours because he refused to go."

Henri Monnier also tells a characteristic anecdote of the great author. After the success of "Père Goriot," he had an idea worth half a million: it merely consisted in opening a grocer's shop on the Boulevard des Italiens, where all the world would flock to buy from the distinguished writer. At Jardies, when he could not carry out his fantasies, he had a simple way of satisfying his desires. He would take a piece of charcoal and write upon the walls and ceilings: "Here a chimney of Parian marble;" "Here a ceiling painted by Eugène Delacroix;" "Here a mosaic flooring made of all the rarest woods."

De Balzac was an indefatigable writer: from 1827 to 1848 he published ninety-seven works, every word of which he wrote himself, without the aid of a secretary or a corrector of proofs. For the theatres he did not work so industriously, owing to a certain want of the poetical afflatus: thus, he once gave Théophile Gautier a five-act tragedy to put into rhyme, and was quite

surprised that it was not finished in three days. His first piece was "Vautrin," brought out at the Porte St. Martin in 1840, and suppressed, as one of the actors mimicked a very high personage. His next piece was the "Ressources de Quinola," performed at the Odéon; and his last, "Mercadet," which met with enormous success at the Théâtre-Français. In 1849, he had in rehearsal a play called "Le Roi des Mendiants," which was, however, never performed.

In 1850, De Balzac returned to Paris with a wife whom he adored, and whom he had loved for many years, the Countess Eve de Hanska. Her fortune would have enabled him to live in comfort for the rest of his life, but death was eager for its prey. He died on the 18th of August of the same year, at the age of fifty. His funeral was attended by all the celebrities of the capital, and the cords were held by M. Baroche, Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, and Francis Wey. The funeral oration was pronounced by Victor Hugo at Père Lachaise, in the presence of an enormous crowd. He lies between Charles Nodier and Casimir Delavigne, and his bust in bronze, by David d'Angers, crowns the summit of the monument. A few days later, a special decree ordered his bust to be placed in the museum at Versailles, that Pantheon of French celebrities. Like Béranger, the author of the "Comédie Humaine" had not the honour to be a member of the Académie Française: he failed twice in his attempts to enter it, just as he had missed the Monthyon prize in 1835 with his "Médecin de Campagne." The learned Areopagus,

when the question of admitting De Balzac was discussed, gave as the pretext for refusal his want of sufficient fortune. "As the Academy does not want me in my honourable poverty," the candidate wrote on this occasion to his friend Charles Nodier, "it will have at a later date to do without my riches."

That De Balzac should not have been honoured during his life is not surprising, for he had raised himself a relentless band of enemies by his haughtiness and vanity. No occasion was neglected to hold him up to ridicule: his smallest and most harmless weaknesses were branded, and men even sought, at rare intervals, to doubt his ability. It is possible that in England a fairer appreciation of his talent can be obtained than in his fatherland, and what strikes us most in his works is his thorough nationality. We know no other French author who reproduces in such photographic wise the virtues and defects of his countrymen and women, or is so thoroughly French in his ideas and incidents. For this reason his works will never become popular in England, nor do we wish to see them so, for the doctrines they generally inculcate are quite subversive of those ideas of morality which fortunately obtain among ourselves. Still the study of such a man's life is interesting, as proving that the minutest observer falls into the self-same errors which he ever so stringently rebukes, and it is only another instance of the truth of Burns's lines:—

> "Oh! would some power the giftie gie us
> To see ourselves as others see us."

Now that the man is beginning to be forgotten in France, and his failings regarded as amiable weaknesses, his writings are growing more popular than ever, for there is no doubt that in his peculiar line he is unapproachable. Whether De Balzac prostituted his undoubtedly great talents by the selection of such subjects we need not here discuss, but it seems to us that, unless the French people encouraged and admired such dangerous books, we should have fewer imitators of Balzac, and more followers of Souvestre. We regret much, for the sake of France, that we are forced to the conviction that every work written by De Balzac gave one more blow to French morality, and that the deplorable condition of society in that country is in a great measure owing to the success of the school of which he was the arch teacher. The author of "Le Père Goriot" has passed away from us, but the terrible influences his pernicious doctrines exercised upon society will last as long as the reputation of the author.

CHAPTER XI.

FRENCH FASHIONABLE LIFE.

MONSIEUR LE BARON DE MORTEMART BOISSE, COMTE DE MARLE, chamberlain to his Imperial and Royal Highness the Grand Duke of Tuscany, commander and knight of several French and foreign orders, has a mission. It is his duty to make known to the world, through the convenient medium of Hachette's cheap series, the usages obtaining in the elegant world of Paris, and to play the part of a modern Chesterfield, as bear-leader and teacher of politeness to the supposititious nephew of a mythical Vicomtesse de Toustain, who is about to commence his perilous travels through the fashionable world of Paris. According to our author's showing, and the old lady's letter to him, the young man is sadly in want of a guide; for though the charmers in the country have repeatedly lectured him about his want of politeness and *empressement* towards the fair sex, the slight attention he pays to his toilette and his ignorance of the customs of the world, he is still blind enough to prefer his shooting-jacket, his cigar, his horses, and his dogs, to what a French woman may be pardoned for regarding as the only *jucunda et idonea vitæ*. But let us employ the lady's own words in de-

scribing an interview she had on this all-important subject with her nephew :—

"'You live here in your shell, without thinking of all the happy faculties with which you are endowed. You fancy you have done wonders by seizing on some false Parisian type in order to cast ridicule on politeness, the duties of a well-educated man, and the etiquette of courts or of the great world; but etiquette, regarded from a certain point of view, is indispensable for the civilized man, whose type, I repeat to you, is at Paris. You must learn, then, my dear boy, that after your college education you have another to go through, that of the *salon*—of the knowledge of life, which will render you distinguished.' 'But, my dear aunt, what do you mean by that vague term 'the world?' Gustave asked me. The question was difficult, and would have required a volume for a proper reply. However, here you have my answer, dear cousin, but your astonishment will equal mine in seeing the effect it produced. 'Tis a stroke of fortune, like gaining a prize in the Paris lottery. 'My dear child,' I said to him, 'I mean, by that remark, the world in general, which is composed of a multitude of lesser worlds. Thus we have the court world, where the severe etiquette, self-love, and ambition frequently absorb all other faculties, and where husbands pay a high price for the dress or success of their wives; the diplomatic world, elegant, amiable, talented, and discreet; the sporting world, one of those serious institutions imported from over the water; the scientific world, which grows pallid over books, and dies of diffi-

culties; the agricultural world, which would gladly supply us the bread we want; the horticultural world, which aims to produce a tulip with a hyacinth smell, or a hyacinth with a violet odour; the chess world, which absorbs all the human faculties on a board; the Bourse world, where you grow rich by employing other people's money;* the business world,' I added, with a laugh, 'where you also grow rich when you hold the handle of the fryingpan (*la queue de la poêle*), in which those who bring the butter are fried; the whist world, to which useless guests are sent, near the *salon* in which others are amusing themselves; the theatrical world, which you leave off visiting so soon as you have secured a free admission; the hunting world, in which you kill what you can, at times your friend or yourself; the dancing world, which grows smaller daily, and will soon be represented by bows; the world of restaurants, where you can dine for from two to two hundred francs a head; the army world, where you always acquire glory but rarely money; the world of the fencing-room, where you learn fencing to defend yourself from insult, and sometimes to provoke it; the world of the *dames quêteuses*, who, without any fortune, live gently, benignly, and very bountifully, in a nice little set of well-furnished rooms, where some good and old clergymen come sometimes to dine with them; last of all, there is the great world, the world of celebrities, the poetical world, the elegant and spiritual world of good society: that exists,

* This *mot* is stolen from Dumas *fils*, who, in his turn, stole it from Heine.

traditionally, among the duchesses of the Faubourgs St. Germain and St. Honoré, and, at the present day, of the Champs Elysées. Good company may certainly be found also in the Chaussée d'Antin, but in that case you must keep aloof from the part where the Marquises du Helder, the Ladies of the Rue Taitbout, and the Camelias of Bréda-street reside.'"

We are not surprised that the nephew, captivated by this glowing description, should give up horses and dogs and proceed to Paris to place himself under the tutelage of our author, who has written *La Vie Elégante* for his guidance; and we have no doubt, if he followed all the rules laid down, he returned to his château a veritable Adonis. Let us see, then, what we should have to do and to leave undone, in the improbable event of our being thrown into the society which enjoys the distinguished acquaintance of the Baron de Mortemart Boisse.

The opening chapter of this valuable work is devoted to *politesse* generally, and our author explains that his sole motive in writing the book was, because every other manual of etiquette was imperfect; but as every writer on the subject, from Ἀγώγος down to the "Complete Letter-writer," price one penny, urges the same reason, we need not delay over it for any length of time. Of course, the marquis challenges for France the right of being the most polite nation in the world: how could it be otherwise, when their politeness was handed down to them from the Greeks *viâ* Rome! Proceeding to individualize, he draws our attention to those "chivalrous words"—

more than chivalrous perhaps—addressed to the enemy, "Have the kindness to fire first." This furnishes an opportunity for having a rap at England, whose Addison, much to our author's surprise, qualified French politeness as artificial. Probably 'tis this fear of artifice which causes the English to dispense with it so frequently, and occasioned Montesquieu to say, "The English are so busy that they have not the time to be polite," and the Duc de Lauraguais to declare, on his return, that he had found in England nothing polished but the steel. Our countrymen should take a lesson in true politeness from the following anecdote, quoted from St. Simon:—

"The politeness of the Duc de Coislin was so great, that, on a foreign ambassador paying him a visit, he wished to accompany him to the street. But the ambassador, himself a very polite man, would not permit it. Hence arose a contest of politeness between them, in which the ambassador saw that Coislin could only be vanquished by a bold stroke. In consequence, on arriving in the passage, he locked the door, to prevent the duke following him. M. de Coislin, quite in despair, opened one of the windows, and, not frightened at the drop, jumped out into the street in time to bow the ambassador into his carriage."

In exemplifying his politeness, the duke had sustained no other injury than putting his thumb out of joint. The king, on hearing of it, sent his surgeon, Felix, to set it. When the thumb was set, the duke wished to conduct the surgeon to the stair-head. The surgeon

resisted: there was a struggle as to the possession of the door, and the unlucky thumb was put out again.

In addition to those manners and customs to which we shall presently allude as obtaining in the highest society, it must not be forgotten that fashion deals with proper names. Just as we have our Chumleys, Sinjohns, and Darbys, so the French, when speaking of the Baron de Besenval, say Bezval. Prince Talleyrand is known as Talran. If mentioning the Dukes of Damas, Duras, Brancas, you must be careful not to pronounce the *s*. M. de Castries finds his name abbreviated into Castre. The Count de Soyecourt becomes Socour. Lastly, the Counts de Castellane, de Béarn, or de Bernis would not be recognised, unless you called them Castlelane, Béar, Berni.

On the subject of dress, our author becomes almost sublime. He deplores in most pathetic language that rigorous fashion which compels us to look like a middle term between the dissenting minister and the enwaitered greengrocer. Even the white waistcoat has gone out of fashion, except for those happy few who wear French or foreign orders round the neck. That *sans gêne* which present society has so eagerly adopted injures the effect, and even the elegance, of manners. Our author tells a most affecting anecdote he heard from Baron Dénon, about Dorat, that type of the frivolous world, who, when dying, played his part as a man of fashion, with beautiful lace ruffles, and fancy sword-knots, presents from that Comtesse Fanny de Beauhar-

nais, who wrote such charming letters to Beaumarchais, and whom Mme. Le Brun accused of "making her face and not making her verses." As fashion is fickle as fancy, our author wastes no valuable time in describing the cut of male vestments or the shape of feminine attire. As for the latter article, some lady of the most irreproachable taste ought to direct her sex; but it is not so. Excepting the fashion of *jupons-ballons*, which is said to have been set by the Empress Eugenie, the rest comes from chance and the fancy of the milliners. The time is past when the Duchesse de Duras could say: "The last person I would consult about my toilette is my milliner." All husbands who suffer at the present time from the exaggerated proportions of feminine attire, will join with us in wishing for the return of those good old times. But we are afraid that our author will attain no honour in his own country while striving to inculcate the axiom that beauty when unadorned is adorned the most.

La tenue, formerly called *le maintien*, naturally follows dress. The baron quotes several instances of bad habits to be guarded against. Thus a *parvenu* will strike you on the shoulder, call you my dear fellow, and throw himself back into a chair, playing with his breloques, and talking about "my carriages, my horses, my liveries," &c. A statesman, remarkable for his brilliant talent and easy manners, forgot himself so far as to tap a foreign ambassador—a great gentleman, too—on the stomach! When driving out, M. —— seats himself at the back of the carriage, and allows his daughter, a most

agreeable young person, to sit in front. This is an offence to politeness and to the well-educated public that see him pass along the Champs Elysées. As a general rule, you must never wear your hat when seated with a lady in a *coupé* or *berline*. You are only allowed to wear your hat in an open carriage. If there be a gentleman in years in the same carriage with you, give him the back seat; and you in the same way, if he address you in a room in a standing posture, you must also rise. On the subject of gloves our author is equally inspired:

"Gloves are the obligato complement of every costume: hence I cannot omit speaking of them to you. Their existence is not modern: traces of them are found in Scripture, in Ruth and in the Book of Kings. Homer, in his Odyssey, shows us Laertes pulling up thorns in his garden, his hands being defended by leather gloves. Xenophon refers their first use to the Persians. Athenæus describes a celebrated *gourmand* who came to a banquet with gloved hands to eat more rapidly and easily, while the other guests waited for the viands to become sufficiently cool to handle. Silk mittens remind us of the fine days of the court of Louis XIV. and the coquettish epoch of Louis XV. At the present day we have mittens, gloves of kid, worsted, silk, muslin, Scotch thread, and cotton. For your guidance, learn that men of fashion must wear during the day doeskin, beaver, or chamois gloves of various shades, and in the evening straw-coloured gloves for the *salon* or the theatre. D'Orsay established this at London in 1839. A gentle-

man belonging to the English fashion must use six pair of gloves a day. In the morning, to drive his dog-cart, reindeer-skin gloves. When hunting the fox, chamois leather gloves. On returning to London in the tilbury, beaver gloves. On going later to walk in Hyde Park, coloured doeskin gloves. On going to dinner, yellow dogskin gloves. For the evening, the ball, or the rout, gloves of white thread, embroidered with silk. Which constitutes an outlay of forty-eight francs seventy-five cent. a day for gloves alone; or, per annum, seventeen thousand seven hundred and ninety-three francs. I limit myself to two pair a day, which I have explained to you. It is only at the chase, either royal or that of rich gentlemen, that three pair become indispensable."

The next most important point to be regarded by the fashionable neophyte is the choice of his language. Our author is not of opinion that you should always laugh with those who laugh, or cry with those who cry. It may be that business takes you among low persons who speak deplorably, and you must be careful not to imitate them. Here follows a lecture which may prove valuable to English readers, as imparting those *nuances* of conversation which, neglected, betray the Anglo-Parisian at once. In asking a husband about the health of his wife, you must not say, "Madame votre épouse;" or, if inquiring after his daughter, you must not ask, "Comment va votre demoiselle?" You will say to the husband, "Comment va madame——?" adding the husband's name. If inquiring after the health of his daughter, you will say, "Mademoiselle votre fille."

When talking to children about their parents, you will be careful to say, "Monsieur votre père," "Madame votre mère," &c. A worthy provincial, who came to Paris at the last *fêtes*, returned home, saying that he was very happy to have seen "l'empereur, son épouse, et leur petit bonhomme." In speaking to a young person, you must always say very distinctly, "Mademoiselle," for "Mam'selle" is low or impertinent. In Italy, it is permissible to say, in speaking of great ladies who are perfectly virtuous, "la Colona," "la Corsini," &c. In France, the susceptibilities or purism of the language only permit such abbreviations for those who belong to the theatrical world; and besides, when speaking of great artistes, it is in very good taste to precede their names with Mademoiselle or Madame. "Femme enceinte" is no longer used: "femme grosse" is more usually employed; and the phrase "état intéressant" has been adopted, although affected. Never say a "cadeau," but a "don." The expressions "orgie," "bacchanal," and similar words, should never be heard in a drawing-room. A single instance, taken from the "demi-monde," will preserve you from such an oversight. On one of the visits of those unknown marchionesses and impossible duchesses, the mistress of the house said to a young person, "By the way, little one, the marquis here present has had for a long time a *tocade* for you." "Thank you," said the young person, assuming the fashionable style, "je ne cultive pas les jeunes gens." Never say of a stout man that he is "puissant;" and in speaking of any one who has been raised to high rank in the Legion of Honour, do not

remark that he has obtained the "crachat," for that is low and disgusting; say the "plaque of the Legion." Never call Paris "la capitale." It is no longer the mode to say "pincer de la harpe," "toucher du piano." The term "jouer" is applied to all these instruments. You must also say "battre la caisse," and not "battre le tambour," for the "tambour" is the man who beats the "caisse." The word "croisée" is antiquated: always say "fenêtre." You must not say, "I have eaten un fruit, un raisin:" you must employ "du fruit, du raisin." In speaking to a distinguished and respectable woman, you may say to her, "I will have the honour to pay my court to you on such a day (*faire ma cour*), if you will allow me;" but you must not assert that "M. —— fait la cour à Madame ——" It is more proper to express yourself thus: "M. —— renders homage to the talent of Madame ——;" "to the beauty" would not be perfect, for that might give a material colouring to the attentions of M. ——; and, as a general rule, materialism is disliked in good society. Never employ the trivialities, "I am going to throw myself into the arms of Morpheus," or, "I am going this evening into society" (*en société*). The only permissible use of the word "société" is when you are engaged in a company with other persons for commercial purposes. But the best idea of the misuse of this word is found in the Memoirs attributed to the Marquis de Créquy: "Ceux qui disent la bonne société ne sont pas de la bonne compagnie." Nor must you say "aller en soirée," for by the same rule you could say "aller en jour, en matinée, en nuit."

Another thing to be avoided is any confusion of "mortifier" with "fâcher," or the use of such odious expressions as "En usez-vous?" in offering a friend a pinch; or, "J'y as de suite;" "se détruire" for "se tuer;" or, "his proceedings 'vis-à-vis de moi'" for "envers moi." The man who says of another, "C'est un farceur," or of a woman, "C'est une farceuse," should go back at once to the pot-house whence he came.

If you ever enter an omnibus, as our author is in the habit of doing, you will hear persons who incommode you say, "Excusez," for, "I beg your pardon." Many would say, with the best meaning, "Je vous demande excuse," forgetting that if they were talking French, this would be as much as saying, "You have insulted me, and I expect you to make your excuse," which would be rather disagreeable to you, after having your favourite corn trodden on. In stating that a thing is in the fashion or out of it, never make use of the phrase, "C'est le bon genre," or, "Cela est de mauvais genre," for "genre" can never be the synonyme of "mode" or "goût." There are many other *lapsus linguæ* quoted by our author, for which we have not space, but must refer our readers to the work itself, as a very valuable monitor of colloquialisms to be avoided.

While discoursing on etiquette, our author protests against any wish to demand admiration for ceremonials which (and especially those connected with court) he regards with much aversion. Still, in a well-regulated society, he considers that each individual must strive for the comfort of the mass, and this can only be effected

by the observance of certain rules. Napoleon the Great, who had a mania for classification, said, "Were Corneille alive I would make him a prince." By a natural process, he slides from this remark into presentation at court:—

"Whatever may be your nobility, your rank, high distinction, or celebrity, when introduced into the presence of a sovereign you must conform to the three salutations of etiquette. You know, too, that you must address him in the third person, and have your gloves removed. You say, 'Will the emperor deign to grant me such a favour?' If it is a king or a queen, you employ the same expression, saving the difference of title. If it be a ruling prince, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, for instance, you know that he is an imperial and royal highness, and that the Grand Duke of Baden is only a royal highness. In addressing sovereign princes of this category, and princes of the imperial or royal blood, you employ the title 'Monseigneur,' as well as to cardinals, who are also 'Eminences.' The word 'Monsieur' must always precede the title of princes of the blood, when speaking of them. Thus, you must not say, the 'Comte de Chambord,' the 'Duc d'Orleans,' but 'M. le Duc,' 'M. le Comte,' and, in addressing them, you must say, 'Monseigneur.' The title of prince in France has less value than that of duke, for there have been all sorts of princes of the Holy Empire, and so on, while the title of duke has not been so lavishly distributed. . . . If you meet in society an aged prince, or one of high position in public affairs, you may address

him as 'Mon Prince,' but not repeatedly; you must always guard against any appearance of servility. The title of 'Excellency' is given to ministers, marshals, and ambassadors. But you must know that a marshal of France would be very little flattered by being termed 'Excellency,' or by giving him his noble title, if he possess one. In speaking to M. le Duc de Malakhoff, you must say 'M. le Maréchal.' . . . . Again, if you were to finish a letter to your sovereign, to a minister, to a marshal, to a person of exalted rank, with the words, 'I have the honour,' &c., you would commit a fault against etiquette. You must write, 'I am,' &c. But to all other persons, except your friends and equals, you should precede your signature with the words, 'I have the honour,' &c."

Of the martyrs produced by court etiquette our author gives many instructive instances, beginning with that king of Spain who was roasted, because the grandee whose duty it was to hand the fire-screen happened to be out of the way. Among those less known we will quote a letter of the Princesse des Ursins, written to the Maréchale de Noailles: "To what employment, good God, have you introduced me? I have not the slightest rest, and cannot even find time to speak to my secretary. There is no longer any idea of resting after dinner, or eating when I am hungry; I am only too happy to make a poor meal while hurrying to and fro, and then it is very rare that I am not summoned just as I have sat down to table. In truth, Madame de Maintenon would laugh heartily were she to know all

the details of my duties. Tell her, I implore you, that it is I who have the honour of taking the King of Spain's dressing-gown when he goes to bed, and handing it to him with his slippers when he rises. So far I could be patient: but it is really too absurd, that every night when the king enters the queen's bedchamber, the Comte de Bonavente loads me with his majesty's sword and a lamp, which I generally upset over my dress. The king would never get up at all, if I did not draw his curtain, and it would be a sacrilege were any one but I to enter the queen's apartment while they are in bed. Lately the lamp had gone out, because I had spilt half the oil; I did not know where the windows were, because we arrived at this place in the night; I thought I should break my nose against the wall; and the King of Spain and I ran against one another during nearly a quarter of an hour while looking for them. His majesty is so well satisfied with me, that he is sometimes kind enough to summon me two hours sooner than I care to rise. The queen enters into his jests; but still I have not gained the confidence she had in her Piedmontese waiting-women. I am astonished at it, for I wait on her better than they did; and I am sure they did not take off her shoes and stockings so properly as I do."

In Paris there is a constant succession of new comers who have made a fortune none know how, and spend it none know for what object. They are known by the name of the "newly landed." As they have heard of the enjoyments of Paris, they naturally seek presentations, and are not particular as to their society. But it

requires great tact and time to form a suitable circle of friends in Paris when you arrive as a stranger. You must be introduced to each man by a lady, and to each lady by her husband. Our author strongly recommends the choice of a lady of a certain age to be your introducer into polite society. Your education must also have been carefully attended to, if you desire to shine, and you are recommended to have at your fingers' ends the letters of Mmes. de Sévigné, Du Deffand, and l'Espinasse; the memoirs of Mme. d'Epinay, Lauzun Bezenval, Dangeau, St. Simon, Talleymant des Réaux, Horace Walpole, Grimm, Champfort, and other 'good painters of the manners and customs of courts and elegant company. Here, too, is another hint, which is addressed exclusively to Frenchmen:—

"If one of those accidents, common enough in life, bring you into collision in society with a woman with whom you have been on certain terms of intimacy, take great care to prevent its being suspected, for you would ruin the lady and injure yourself; for it is one of the enjoyments of the world generally to attack two parties. Never boast of any of your successes—any of your points of superiority of any description; you will never be pardoned any advantage you may happen to possess, neither fortune, wit, nor talent. Love is said to possess a good deal of imagination; hatred has still more, and a great amount of perseverance in the bargain. If you desire to maintain the affection which attaches you to a lady friend, never speak about her, and she must do the same by you. Happiness is consecrated by mystery.

If you let fall any hints about your bliss, you will excite envy, jealousy, the necessity of not leaving to others the felicity persons do not themselves enjoy. The statue which receives your adoration will soon be removed from its pedestal; but that is not enough, it must be shattered, and it will be so."

On the subject of dining our author is superb. He commences by warning his readers that good society no longer indulges in saturnalia; and though the youth of Romieu was but a long dinner, that good liver set bounds to his appetites. The great moralist, Dr. Johnson, asserted that the most important thing for every civilized being was dinner, but you must never, our author warns you, be present at a bachelor's dinner, unless you are master of yourself; your head is troubled, reason flies, and you may suffer long-lasting regret for a short debauch. Our forefathers, it is true, were guilty of strange excesses; thus, MM. de Brissac, de Vitré, de Matha, de Fontrailles, on leaving the dinner-table at Coulon's, and seeing a funeral procession pass with priests, crosses, &c., rushed upon it with drawn swords, crying, "Down with the enemy!" In these degenerate days such playful ebullitions are stopped by the strong arm of the law. The chief aphorism of gastronomy, as quoted from Brillat Savarin, is: "Les animaux se repaissent, l'homme mange, l'homme d'esprit seul sait manger?" And it may be asserted as a certain rule that the true art of dining satisfies three senses at once, sight, smell, and taste. A good and healthy repast exercises a notable influence over the imagination, the

humour, perhaps over the heart. Cardinal Richelieu was accused of being bloodthirsty, when he was in fact suffering from indigestion. In this wise does our gallant author lecture ladies who object to masculine good cheer:—

"In Molière's days the women had a fancy for thinness and pallor: it was a foretaste of the 'consumptive poesy.' They tightened their waists till they made furrows on their persons; they only ate enough to keep them from inanition, and each house had its Philaminte to exclaim:—

> "'Que ce grossier discours terriblement assomme!
> Et quelle indignité, pour ce qu'on appelle homme,
> D'être laissé sans cesse aux soins matériels,
> Au lieu de se hausser vers le spirituel.'

"Alas! fair and yet lean languishers of the period of the 'femmes savantes,' what would you have said had you known that, after your time, Voltaire, the author of ravishing epistles to so many charming women, went to sup with the Maréchale de Villars, when they ate hot meats and drank hard? Come, come, ladies of all periods, who deprive yourselves of food or contract your waist, in defiance of all the ancient statues, which show you what nature demands for the life of the loveliest women, even for a Venus, believe me, follow that old proverb of our fathers: 'Qui ne vit ne vaut.' I suppose, ladies, that you are ardent admirers of Lamartine's poetry; well, he dines like any other man, no more nor less, and I even believe he dines sometimes at Véry's. I suppose, too, that you appreciate the delicious poesy

of A. Dumas, Emile Deschamps, Lefèvre, Drumier, St. Félix, and our other famous poets. Well, these gentlemen dine perfectly at the Frères Provençaux, the Maison Dorée, or at Bernard's, when they do not happen to visit Philippe. Thus, you see, men may dine while making verses like Lamartine, or writing magnificent prose poetry like Chateaubriand. As to that which terrifies the most delicate persons on the subject of gallantry, they may reassure themselves: I never knew any hearty guests, after the repast, fail in their gallant conduct towards women.

"'Sine Cerere et Libero friget Venus.'

I know not, in truth, whether I ought now to speak to you about the literary ladies who, in prose or verse, march beneath the banner of George Sand, Louise Colet, or the Comtesse Dash; but you must know, poor drooping flowers as you are, that the women of the rarest genius, the most powerful mind, dine perfectly."

The rules of the dinner-table may be shortly condensed as follow: you must never open your napkin, but lay it on your lap in folds; you must not use your fork in eating soup; you must break the shell of the new-laid egg which you have been eating: ask for beef and not for boulli; for fowl, capon, &c., and not for volaille; never ask for Bordeaux or champagne, but for vin de Bordeaux, &c.; break your bread instead of cutting it; drink your coffee in the cup and not in the saucer; eat tidily, not making a noise with your jaws; put not your elbows on the table, nor offer to fill your

neighbours' glass unless they may ask you to do so. Having thus laid down the material points, we will proceed to more elevated notions:—

"I suppose you are about to dine at a great lady's. If you are asked for half-past seven, it is a great dinner; if for half-past six, it is a less important affair; if the card says six o'clock, it is a mere family rejoicing, you may be sure, for in the other case the chef, or the cordon-bleu, would lose his importance. In any case, be careful to have your horses put to, so that you may arrive ten minutes after the time indicated. To arrive at the appointed time is provincial; to get there too soon is indiscreet; but to be too late is not polite. Enter firmly, without embarrassment, but without disturbance; display a worthy modesty, a perfect politeness, and a noble deference for all. If this cost you any portion of your self-love or character, remember that Ovid, on modifying his habits among the Scythæ, said, 'Barbarus hîc ego sum.' Salute the lady of the house with respectful ease, then her husband with deference, and, lastly, the guests with a gracious and general salute. . . . . The hat question is not to be disdained: when you are going into the dining-room you must put it down for the first time, and remove the straw-coloured kid from your left hand which you have kept on—the other had been removed prior to your entrance, to satisfy the new custom of 'shake-hand,' which is not polite with a glove. Of course you have been careful to choose beforehand the corner in which you will deposit your hat, so that you may recover it easily on returning to the drawing-room, for you must never be without it

except when you are on intimate terms. I knew an excellent provincial once, owner of a handsome château, a man of fortune and heart, who missed a brilliant marriage because he entered a drawing-room in the Champs-Elysées hatless, both hands gloved, and with his arms going through telegraphic movements. If your ideas are not quite made up about any one of the thousand trifles which surge up at any moment, observe silently, and imitate what you have seen done by others who are well educated. Brillat Savarin tells us that the table is the touchstone of the gentleman. Here is one out of a thousand instances. A clever person, sprung though I know not whence, managed, I know not how, to procure an invitation to dinner at a great house, by the help of a 'nom de terre,' such as Beaumarchais would call a 'nom de guerre.' M. de Richelieu honoured the table by his presence, and he heard his neighbours asking if the stranger was of a 'good house,' as used to be said in those days. The cardinal said nothing, but watched the unknown. He soon unmasked the adventurer *on seeing him eat olives with a fork.* In former days, on being invited to the house of a great lady, you might have received lessons which I would not recommend you to employ now. The Duc and Duchesse de Chaulnes were accustomed to help one of the dishes at table with the spoon they had been using. More recently, the Princesse de Talmont, who had a superb hand, ate salad with her fingers.* At the

* In the same way great George our king, fourth of that name, would take a chicken-bone in his royal hands and gnaw it with his royal teeth.

present day such acts would be most unbecoming, and we are fortunately saved from them by our mode of serving; the officers of the mouth go round the table and offer you the dishes, mentioning their names. If you accept, the steward, who is accompanied by two lacqueys carrying the dishes and sauces, helps you, and one of the people hands you your plate ready loaded. A very excellent custom we have adopted from the English and Americans is to eat almost everything with the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. The English are full of skill in this new mode, and have succeeded in peeling a peach without touching it at all with the fingers."

As regards the last paragraph, we sincerely trust that the French will not be induced to accept all the American fashions blindly, or else we may be having a revised edition of the Baron de Mortemart's book, in which picking your teeth with a fork may be gravely recommended.

In his chapters on drawing-room society, our baron overflows with anecdotes, which we regret our space will not permit us to quote. Among the ladies whom you may meet in society, there are, of course, several whose education has not been equal to their present position. One of them, a marchioness, is in the habit of writing "voilà" with two *l*'s, and "soupirs" with two *p*'s. On being told with great delicacy by the Baronne de Fresne that the French language saved those two letters, the marchioness replied, "Mon Dieu! how poor our language must be, then!" Among the nuisances of high society

are those persons who have been christened "les rats de lettres," species of parasites, who pick up bons mots and repeat them as their own. A great Parisian capitalist, who had an unbounded ambition to unite to the "capacity of the hollow of the hand" a reputation for wit, lately requested a gentleman, noted for his wit, to put him up to some good story which he could repeat, and gave him a note for five hundred francs as the considera tion. On the next Sunday the Bourse man took an opportunity to tell his story, but he made such a deplorable mess of it, that the author, in horror, went up to him: "Here, sir," he said, adroitly thrusting the note into his hand, "take back your money and restore me my story." Another point which the baron presses on our attention is, not to go into ecstacies about the beauty of the ladies you may meet, for, if you see them by daylight, you may suffer an extreme disappointment. A woman who may have overwhelmed you with her flood of beauty at night, will appear to you almost ugly by day. Distance, too, exerts a great influence. Fine and delicate features lose their charms when far from you. It is the opposite with strongly-marked features. A large nose, mouth, or eyes have enchantment lent to them by distance. There are beauties by night and beauties by day. A little yellow or black brunette becomes white and agreeable under a brilliant light, and black hair looks better than light. Indian ink, rouge, white, and the new chemical preparations, are only used by actresses—at least, so our author hopes. As for your conversation in company, the baron refers you to the

following anecdote, as showing what example you should follow: "A large number of friends were invited one evening to Madame de ——'s, to hear portions of a new translation of 'Paradise Lost' read. M. ——, who had been invited, was unable to attend, so he sent his excuses in the following quatrain:—

"'Tous les plaisirs pour moi sont du fruit défendu:
Je ne regrette point vos spectacles, vos fêtes;
Mais celle qui les donne et les lieux où vous êtes,
Voilà mon Paradis perdu!'"

The misfortune is that we are not all poets, and many of us would be sadly at a loss if we had to follow this gentleman's example whenever an accident prevented us from accepting an invitation.

When you are at a ball there are also certain rules to be observed: in dancing, for instance, you must never hug your partner, after the fashion of the casinos, or ask to be permitted to hold your partner's fan, handkerchief, or smelling-bottle. Even if you are on the most intimate terms you should avoid this, for such familiarity is always noticed, and you would injure any lady who forgot herself so far as to accept your offer. For the same reason, do not speak in a low voice to your partner; for, if she is well brought up, she will answer you in a loud key, to let it be seen that she does not accept secret confidences. If you conduct a lady to her carriage, offer her your arm, but never touch her naked arm, which the sleeves of the present day leave so much uncovered. Madame de Sévigné tells us, that when she went to Marseilles she visited the monuments of

that city on the fist of the bishop. This was indubitably more respectful than the arm of the present day, but must have been very inconvenient for both parties:—

"I am so much afraid of seeing you enter into hazardous conversation, that I recommend you to the part of a prudent observer and reserved talker. Think, too, that the language and intelligence with which we are endowed must never be employed save for the truth, in spite of the contrary maxim attributed to Talleyrand. Falsehood leads further than is intended; and remember it is the vice of lacqueys. In some groups you will hear, perchance, atrabilious persons exercising their maliguity: be circumspect. You may hear, too, Islanders of the old rock, studious readers of the *Quarterly Review* and Colman's comedies, attacking France: be generous. You will hear them perhaps say that the Parisians are badly dressed, that the women only like showy colours, and that they are facile beauties: what does it concern you? You will hear these rulers of the *Quarterly* say that the Countess —— is a Rubens beauty of the first water, or that the Duchess of ——, a poor, weak, and sickly lady, is a beauty of the sylph-like order: be impassive, and astonished at nothing, not even their journals, which so recently attacked France, forgetting so speedily Inkermann, and that mot of Napoleon the First, 'Les coups d'épingle entre les nations précèdent les coups de canon.'"

CHAPTER XII.

DOWN THE NILE.

M. CHARLES DIDIER is a French gentleman, tolerably well known in literature. In the work we have now under consideration,* we are glad to find him as vivacious as ever, and although prematurely grey, and afflicted with almost total blindness, he possesses the same keen eye for female beauty. In this volume of his travels he positively revels in descriptions of the awalim and other fair and dark *traviate* of the land of Goshen, and he rarely describes any antique ruin without winding up with some glowing account of animated nature. But, after all, this is an idiosyncrasy very pardonable in an inflammable son of Gaul.

M. Didier takes up his narrative at Khartoum, the capital of the Egyptian Soudan, and, from his description, worthy of being in Missouri, for rowdyism and other popular amusements are carried on to a frightful extent. The town was only founded in 1823, but at present contains from thirty to thirty-five thousand inhabitants. There is nothing remarkable about it, except that it is the metropolis of the desert, and might become

* Cinq Cents Lieues sur le Nil. Par Charles Didier. Paris: Hachette.

a valuable and flourishing entrepôt if any other people but the Turks held it. At the time of our author's visit it was the residence of a governor-general, who held under his authority the whole of the Egyptian Soudan and Nubia as far as the second cataract. Owing to his distance from Cairo, he had almost unlimited authority, and commanded a body of fifteen thousand blacks, usually employed for all the worst purposes of extortion and plunder. Since then, Saïd Pasha has found it advisable to suppress the government general of the Soudan, and subdivide the country into five mudiriés, which correspond directly with Cairo. During the reign of Abbas Pasha, Khartoum was a place of transportation, whither he sent every one at all suspected by him. Many were innocent enough, but now and then his justice fell upon the right man. Says our author:—

"During my stay here arrived Abd-ur-Rhaman, an old Copt, and late governor of Mansoura, in Lower Egypt, where he had committed, through cupidity, fearful atrocities. In order to force the unhappy inhabitants to give up their money, he sawed them between two planks. But he was not transported for his crimes, it was because he had become an object of suspicion to the viceroy, who probably coveted his great riches. This wretch, who, I believe, was a septuagenarian, had been carried off from his family in the middle of the night, and embarked on the Nile with no other clothes than those he wore. All his wealth, according to his own statement, consisted of a medjidié and a watch.

On arriving at Khartoum, he was placed in prison, and endured his reverse of fortune with a resignation worthy of a better life. To hear him talk, you would have taken him for a philosopher sent to the quarries as a reward for his virtues."

M. Didier's host at Khartoum was the Austrian vice-consul, who had been sent there in disgrace. He was an *outré* imperialist. All his sympathies were with the Russians during the past war, and he hated the Hungarians so heartily that he had given his black servant the name of Kossuth, in order that, when thrashing him, he might fancy he had the Hungarian tribune under his cane. Another honour to the town was a Frenchman, chief physician to the province, who had turned Mussulman, and had already married and repudiated fifty wives, without counting those he has had since. Khartoum, in fact, is the last link between barbarism and civilisation—but what civilisation! With rare exceptions it is only displayed in a refinement of vice, and Europe is generally represented by the scum of its population. Greedy merchants go there to buy elephants' teeth, for which they give glass beads, and they fancy everything permissible in these distant regions. But let us turn to more pleasant subjects; for instance, the description of a fantasia given in honour of the marriage of a son of Abbas with a daughter of the Sultan :—

"The songs and dances were performed by Egyptian or Abyssinian women, only distinguishable from each other by their deeper hue. All had their faces un-

covered, and I could only congratulate myself on it, for they were all of a perfect beauty, and in the flower of youth. It is impossible to have more sparkling eyes, whiter teeth, a straighter nose, or finer and more regular features. Dressed in silk robes of bright colours, in which red or yellow was married to bright green or azure blue, their arms and feet were naked. A band of gauze half-veiled their bosom, and their black hair, floating behind them, was adorned with small gold coins running on a thread. In dancing they accompany themselves with the *tar*, or Basque tambourine, and copper castagnettes of the shape of cymbals, called, in Arabic, *sadjat*, which they play with marvellous dexterity. These dances and a portion of the costume are absolutely the same as may be found painted on the old monuments. The almehs (awalim), or dancers, form in Egypt a separate caste, as they did probably in the time of the Pharaohs. They are much more cultivated than other Eastern women; they know how to read and write, and are frequently poetesses. Living without the common law, they do not marry, and are consequently ignorant of the seclusion of the harem, and thus, equally independent by nature as by profession, they enjoy unbounded liberty. They are sent for to all public and private fêtes, and thus they do not accept every invitation. I have known them paid as dearly as a prima donna invited to sing at a concert in the Faubourg St. Honoré, and many grow rich at this trade, which has its risks and fatigues, and does not debar another; so that, although so much sought after, they do not stand in the odour of sanctity."

Abbas Pasha, instigated by his mother, a violent fanatic, and inspired, too, by his own bigotry, exiled all the almehs from Cairo, and sent them to Upper Egypt. The police tracked them like wild beasts, and made razzias in all quarters of the town. Any unfortunate girls caught *in flagrante delicto* were mercilessly flogged, prior to being sent into exile. M. Didier was therefore much surprised to see them dancing under authority at Khartoum, and regarded it as a protest against the government measure. Unfortunately the dances were public, and hence the most piquant of all, what is called "the bee dance," was not executed. At the house of the Austrian consul, M. Didier had an opportunity of witnessing the dance peculiar to the Soudan.

"The first to unveil was a tall woman of about thirty years of age, whose regular face was a brilliant black, and whose head-dress bore a striking resemblance to those visible in the figures of old Egypt or Ethiopia. Her hair, tressed and gummed, was raised in three enormous tufts, two lateral and one behind, and were held up by a large band of gold. This woman was what the Italians call an *impresaria*. The girls who performed her trade were slaves purchased by her, and whose talents enriched her without benefiting themselves, for the wretched girls had nothing of their own. At last the ballet began: strange enough, I assure you, and bearing no resemblance to any I had seen before. At a signal from their mistress, who sat apart, wrapped in her *ferdah*, the slaves, six or seven in number, rose

and threw off their cloaks, remaining only covered by a *raat*, or short petticoat. They were all quite young, charmingly formed, and, although perfectly black, they had noses as straight, lips as fine, and contours as pure as the prettiest women in Paris. They had no drums or castagnettes: they danced to the sound of the voice, those whose turn it was to rest beating measure in their hands. During this time, the dancing-girl, alone in the centre of the circle like a statue of ebony, appears plunged in a profound ecstasy. With her head thrown back, her chest heaving, her arms stiffened, she appears to undergo an internal struggle, and combat an invincible force which compels her to go where she would not. Soon her bosom heaves, her body is affected by nervous shudders, she advances slowly, and as if despite herself, towards one of the spectators she has selected before, or who has been pointed out to her, this generally being the guest for whom the feast is designed. Such is the dance of the Soudan girls. When one has finished another begins, and it is always the same thing. This dance is common to all the women of the White Nile. An American tourist, who made a journey there in 1853, describes a fantasia given in his honour by the women of a tribe whose name I forget, and where all happened precisely as I have described it at the consul's."

Among other places M. Didier visited was the Austrian mission for the conversion of the White Nile savages. He had met the chief of the mission, Dr. Ignatius Knoblicher, at Old Cairo, where he was taking boat for Khartoum. He led about with him, as a specimen, one

of the Bari tribe, whom he had converted, or at least tamed. He was a tall black, very ugly, dressed in a red robe and a plume, and carried under his arm the wooden pillow which the Abyssinians never lay aside. The mission, however, was a fancy of the Archduchess Sophia, and the doctor had made a grand *quête* of several hundred thousand francs, which he expended in hiring a number of European artisans, without counting a cargo of tools, provisions, wine, &c. But, while the workmen fared wretchedly, the worthy doctor denied himself nothing. Dressed in a turban and long Eastern robe, he had no desire to furnish the idolators with an example of Christian austerity. This self-love, our author remarks, is common to nearly all missionaries sent to this country, and especially to Abyssinia; and he was informed by several persons who had resided there for years, that this conduct is of very injurious effect on the natives. It was true that tribes were converted now and then, and remained good Christians so long as they received plenty to eat and drink; but so soon as the provisions gave out, they returned to their idols, and ended by thrashing the priests. The following is a curious piece of argument, which appears, however, to bear some truth on the face of it:—

"Experience has proved that pacific missions are almost always barren of results: it is sorrowful to say so, but it is the fact. The scimitar alone converted Africa and Asia to Islamism, as at a later date the arquebuse of the Spaniards converted America to Catholicism. It was the same in Europe: not to search far for proof,

did it not require the sword of Charlemagne to overthrow the Saxon idols? We must not feel astonished, then, that the Aulic mission of Khartoum has produced no result, and, if it lasted a hundred years, matters would not be more advanced. I am afraid that the present chief of the pious enterprise shares my opinions, and that his views are not entirely disinterested.*

A dahabiyah, belonging to a merchant at Khartoum, was bound to Berber, with a cargo of elephants' teeth, and a passage was offered our author, which he was glad to accept. His dromedaries were sent off overland, under charge of an old soldier, to meet them at Berber, and they started, after the usual dispute with the reis, which could only be settled by a severe dose of stick. They dropped down as far as Sourourab, where they intended to stay for several days, to have an interview with the governor-general, who was expected up the river. Here they were joined by Mahommed Aga, who gave them a princely welcome, and they lived on the fat of the land. For three days and nights it was a constant succession of dancing and singing, although the Turks preferred paying their respects exclusively to the raki. M. Didier appears to have been quite struck with one of the almehs, of the name of Chama. Here is the description of a visit he paid her :—

"We entered a *tougoul* which had been set apart for the almehs, and their meals were brought them twice a day from the Sandjiak. We found them at dinner,

* Since M. Didier was at Khartoum, it appears that the mission has been abolished, for reasons which justify his opinion.

sitting in a circle round a stuffed sheep, which their beautiful white teeth did not spare. They gave us a most flattering reception; all rose up to greet us, and kissed our hands, after the fashion of Eastern women. At my request Chama sung an air, which I considered charming, doubtlessly because it came from such a pretty mouth. But it was the song of the swan. The asses were all bridled and saddled at the door of the *tougoul*. The almehs would return to Khartoum immediately after their meal. I followed with my eyes Chama's blue robe as long as I could distinguish it, and I could not see it disappear without a pang, at which my white beard had cause to blush."

When the pasha arrived, he paid our travellers a studied insult by not inviting them to dinner with the authorities, so they determined on reading him a lesson. On receiving the audience demanded, they declined coffee and pipes, and merely attended to strict matters of business. Many attempts at evasion did Ali Pasha make; but they stuck to their text, and at length extorted from him an unwilling promise to punish an agha who had treated them badly. This settled, they took boat again. We find little novelty in the account of the passage down the river; the usual visit was paid to Meroë, and the same incidents and accidents by flood and field which must befal every Egyptian traveller occurred to M. Didier. At Berber a French merchant offered them a part of his house. They found him married to an Abyssinian girl, who dressed after the

European fashion, not forgetting the bonnet, although shoes and stockings were absent.

The province of Berber formed at that time a mudirié depending from Khartoum. The people are an indigenous race, and very gentle in their manners. They are fond of commercial speculations, and many of them are tolerably well off. Hence, their dwellings are less miserable than those of the other Nubians; these are mostly built of earth, for the town being beneath the eighteenth degree, is beyond the limit of the regular rainfall. The country around Berber is celebrated for a breed of horses known as Dongolas, and much admired in Egypt. They are black, with four white feet. The women, according to our author, are remarkably beautiful, and enjoy a considerable amount of liberty, for, as their husbands are frequently away on business, they like to cheer their solitude by visitors. Perhaps this is the reason why divorces are so frequent at Berber; and there is a singular custom connected with them. If the first husband repent, he can, although remarried, take back his first wife; for this purpose, he need only repudiate the second. But there is a very singular feature connected with this: during the few days demanded by legal exigencies, the first wife has the right to choose a provisional husband. If he pleases her she adheres to him, and thus the fickle husband, who so recently had two wives, suddenly finds himself without either.

At the season of our author's arrival at Berber, the Nile was very low, and it would have been impossible

to pass the Waddy Halfa in a bark. Hence, the travellers decided on making a short cut across the waterless desert, a distance of one hundred leagues, with only one well half way. Hence the passage must be effected with great rapidity, or else the camels may break down. There is a special officer appointed to take charge of passengers from Berber to Korosko, known as the Sheikh-ul-Atmur, or Sheikh of the Desert. His duties are to procure travellers the requisite number of camels, and, of course, he cheats them to his heart's content. Future travellers should be warned that the well-water is perfectly drinkable, and they can, therefore, well spare half a dozen of the camels which the sheik, from motives of consideration, presses on them.

The first part of the journey, as far as Abu-Hamed, was passed pleasantly enough; there was only one sharp attack of simoom, and M. Didier managed to lose his way only once, but the difficulties were now to begin. In the first place, the sheikh of Abu-Hamed insisted on their having six camels more to carry water, &c., for the eight days spent in reaching Korosko. At length, after a violent dispute, they compromised by taking three, which, of course, they did not require. Another of the disagreeables was, that one of the *kabirs*, or guides, they had brought with them from Berber, turned sulky, and they were glad to get rid of him, and, as he had been paid beforehand, he went back in triumph. Then they appealed to the sheikh of Abu-Hamed to find them a guide, which he tried to evade, but finding them resolute, he offered to accompany them himself, as a proof that

he did his duty. They started, and had hardly gone a mile before the sheikh's dromedary ran away with him home, amd they saw him no more. But such tricks upon travellers are common enough. Then, again, the worthy inhabitants of Abu-Hamed did their best to terrify the travellers by telling them of dreadful accidents.

"The conversation turned continually on tragedies of this nature, of which the desert had been the theatre. Merchants wandering about, succumbing to fatigue, thirst, and dying for want of a drop of water; or it was poor children of both sexes, dragged into slavery by the Jellabs, and who, worn out with misery, abandoned by their masters, and left for dead, had been devoured by hyenas. They talked also of a young girl carried off by a lover she had spurned, and who stabbed her in the midst of the desert. They spoke, too, about a young European who, having left the caravan, had not been able to find the track again, and had disappeared for ever in the immensity of the sands. This last accident had only happened a few days previously, and gave occasion for numerous comments. Some whispered that the disappearance of this unhappy man concealed a crime—a vengeance, according to some; a robbery, according to others."

This was not the first time that M. Didier had crossed a desert, but there was something about the present passage which depressed his spirits. It is necessary to travel very quickly for fear of knocking the camels up. There is no rest day or night, for, as the camel-drivers

are owners of the animals, this is an additional incentive to them for haste. Hence they hardly allow the traveller time to breathe. And this haste was justifiable, for during one night's rest the pestilential simoom dried up thirty-seven of the fifty water-skins they had brought with them from Abu-Hamed. For three days and two nights the wretched camels had nothing to drink, until they reached the well of Bir-Mourad, situate just half way to Korosko. And, while the camels are drinking their fill, let us take a glance at the desert, such as M. Didier describes it :—

"This magnificent desert is the African Atmur in all the strength of the term : sand, sand, sand ; not a tree, not a shrub, not a tuft of grass, not a trace of vegetation ; it is sterility in its most naked and arid aspect, desolation of desolation. In vain you advance, nothing changes around you ; nature is ever inflexibly the same ; you appear to remain motionless, fixed by a charm at the same spot during whole days. This sea of sand, like the ocean, has no other limits than the sky, with which it unites and is blended on the horizon. Save some undulations, some asperities of soil, you move constantly along a plain, and this eternal plain, which ever seems to promise something new, extends incessantly in proportion as you advance, and rolls out its silvery surface infinitely. In the distance, however, appear some mountains, like islets in the bosom of the ocean, but at such an immense distance that you are led to ask whether they are not clouds which a puff of wind will dissipate. Each evening before plunging into the sands

whence it arose in the morning, the sun pours its parching beams athwart them, and you move in a plain of fire. But these flames are soon extinguished, the twilight is very short, and the night speedily arrives to change the aspect of the sky and the face of the desert. The ardent, implacable ball, which enkindles the earth, and which the excess of heat frequently pales, is succeeded by a dark blue vault, enamelled with stars whose incomparable brilliancy is the privilege and glory of the tropics. You contemplate it each night, and each night its splendour amazes and charms you like a new spectacle. Neither the eye nor the mind can weary of it. The works of Deity are alone capable of inspiring this ever-renewed admiration, because they are infinite and perfect; the works of man, on the contrary, are so limited and incomplete that they end by inspiring indifference and satiety."

The countless bodies of dead camels, with which the road is literally strown, proves how full of dangers and difficulty it must be for the poor animals; when their strength is exhausted they fall down not to rise again, and being immediately abandoned, hunger finishes what fatigue and thirst commenced. The Bir Mourad is situated in a wide valley, bounded on two sides by mountains, startling from their barrenness. The valley itself is one bed of sand; but, strange to say, there is a station here for two or three dromedaries, employed by the courier who carries letters once a week from Khartoum to Cairo. Here the travellers rested for twenty-four hours, to fetch up their sleep; but in this they

were disappointed, for the jackals surrounded them all night, and kept them awake by their howling. On starting again, three days found them at Korosko, ready to take boat on the Nile once more. The only defect of this short cut is that you lose many fine temples between Korosko and the second cataract, among them being the celebrated Ipsamboul. Korosko itself is an unimportant village, and at the time of our travellers' arrival there was only one dahabiyah there, of which the reis took advantage by charging an exorbitant price. They had only six rowers, and it was a crazy concern at the best, but they could not help themselves; anything was better than staying, perhaps a fortnight, in such a hole as Korosko. In passing through Lower Nubia, M. Didier had plenty of opportunities for visiting the antiquities, but as he tells us nothing new, we prefer quoting an adventure which occurred to him at the Temple of Kalabchek :—

"Wishing to escape the eternal persecution of the peasants, I sought refuge in the most distant part of the ruins. I was beginning to enjoy my solitude, when I heard a light footstep behind me. I turned, and perceived a human figure in the shadow of a tottering doorway. I drew nearer; it was a young girl. She was covered with white drapery, worn with much natural taste, and which being open at several places, by accident or calculation, allowed a perfect outline to be traced. Her drooping shoulders, her well-set neck, gave as much easiness to her movements us they did grace and nobility to her person; her velvety skin had the

warm and lustrous hue of old mahogany; her raven, wiry hair, short in front and longer behind, was arranged in artistically combined tresses, and there was only a very moderate dose of butter upon them; her face, which was uncovered, revealed the most symmetrical features: Greek statuary cannot boast purer lines; her eyes sparkled like two black diamonds; her little white teeth like pearls set in ebony. I had before me the perfect type of a Nubian girl of fifteen. The prettiest European would have been jealous of this lovely African; and as for her colour, it was a further attraction—an attraction, it is true, somewhat material, and which it would take too long to explain here. For my own part, I was so accustomed to it as to forget at times that white women existed."

A pretty poet's dream, is it not? What a pity, then, it should have been dissipated, in M. Didier's case, by the young lady holding out her hand and requesting, after the manner of her country, backshish!

Assouan, from M. Didier's account of it, does not seem the spot which a quiet Englishman would select in preference for his residence. At the time of his visit it was kept under a *régime* of terrorism by a squadron of Bashi-Bazouks and Arnauts. These were not personally troublesome to our author, except in so far that they visited two coffee-houses in close proximity to the spot where M. Didier had put up his tent. Some of these bandits talked Italian after a fashion. One even, who would have been hanged on his looks, talked French, though it would be difficult to say where he had

learned it; possibly, however, he was a deserter from Algiers. This gentleman took our author in immense affection, and expounded to him his views about the blacks, whom he regarded with the extremest contempt. "In short, sir," he wound up his diatribe, "just imagine that they eat rats!" This hero's acquaintance terminated in an adventure.

"One day, on returning to my tent, my surprise was great to find a divinity of the quarter seated on her heels, with her head concealed in her hands! Although she had passed her first youth, I saw before me, when she disclosed it, a face of Florentine bronze, worthy, in its perfection, of having been carved by Benvenuto Cellini. Splendid teeth relieved the brown tones, and brilliant eyes lighted up the face. She rose at once and came to kiss my hand respectfully. What was she doing there, and what did she want? I saw from her expressive pantomime that she had something important to say to me, but how to understand her or make her understand? in what tongue to communicate? My embarrassment was even greater than with the Nubian girl, for there was evidently no question of backshish here. An interpreter was an article of supreme necessity. Chance favoured me. A Hebrew merchant came up at the moment, and I begged him to solve the mystery. In a few minutes he told me the following story in Italian. Her name was Safie. She had been one of the handsomest almehs in Cairo. Carried off in the night by the Khavass, and embarked at Boulak with many of her companions, distributed in passing,

some at Kemieh, some at Luxor, the majority at Esseni, she had been brought as far as Assouan. Her antecedents thus established, she began by excusing herself in the most submissive terms for having dared to penetrate into my tent—an audacious act of intrusion for which she asked my pardon, and which I should certainly forgive after having heard her; for the Francs are generous, and a great bey, like myself, would have pity on a poor girl whose life was in danger. She had had the misfortune to please Othman (that was the name of my friend the Bashi-Bazouk), but she knew what she owed herself. A woman like her was not made for a man like him. On her refusal he had ill-treated her, and threatened, if she persisted in her resistance, to kill her wherever he might meet with her. In this horrible conjuncture she had taken refuge in my tent as an inviolable asylum. She had been told, and had indeed remarked, that Othman professed a high degree of consideration for me. She would therefore have nothing to fear if I would deign to take her under my protection. I would be her buckler, her rampart, her saviour, for Othman would respect in her my client, my slave."

On convincing himself of the truth of this story, M. Didier did not hesitate to conduct Safie to the house of a Copt who had promised her a shelter. No unpleasant results came from his interference: in fact, Othman played the part of a protector to him by keeping the Bashi-Bazouks aloof from the *café* which specially disturbed his sleep. There was no other way to obviate the

nuisance, for the governor of the town was utterly unable to manage the Bashi-Bazouks: they were perfect masters of the town, and the inhabitants only felt too grateful to them for not burning it over their heads. M. Didier even visited the *cafés*—when the Bashis were absent, be it understood—and these visits furnish him with occasion to say a few words about the great social evil. Nor was M. Didier the only one of the party who frequented the *café*, the servants also enjoyed an hour of relaxation; so much so, in fact, that when Rabelais's "mauvais quart d'heure" arrived, a bill was brought in for six hundred cups of coffee. Of course it was laughed at, and about one-fourth paid, though that was a great deal too much. This reminds our author that, in his early youth, an amiable professor of mathematics presided over his studies, whose only fault was drinking. When the cruel Fates cut his thread of life short, the mourning widow received a bill for two thousand *petits verres* which had slipped down the dear departed's throat.

We have but little more to add about M. Didier's travels, for, henceforward, he follows the beaten track. He visited Thebes, as in duty bound, and "did" the Nile after the fashion of the most conscientious traveller, but we find little new or worthy of quotation, except the following:—

"To the west of Siout there is a certain number of oases, some of which have been worked by a Frenchman, to whom Mehemet Ali granted them, and who was called from that reason 'the King of the Oases.

This king, then more than an octogenarian, was a Terrorist *pur sang*, an old friend of Robespierre, which had not prevented him from accepting and bearing the title of Bey. Em Bey, such was his name, had retired to Egypt after the fall of that Republic which so touched his heart: he did not quit that country again, and he had become so naturalized as to adopt its customs, including the harem. Buried in his desert, he ruminated there over his reminiscences, as the camel chews the cud, and would know nothing of what passed in the world: with the Republic all was dead for him. I knew him at Cairo, where he died a short time later, this fossil of a revolutionary epoch, and found in him a faithful personification of 1793: he had retained its passions, he still spoke its language; immovable in his civism, he accused all those of moderation who did not regard the guillotine as the best mode of government, and his sensibility compelled him to recognise the existence of a Supreme Being."

And here we must leave M. Didier. We should not have attempted to show our readers this gentleman's peculiar views, but we find the same sentiments pervading too many of our own travellers. They consider it manly to affect a genteel cynicism, and with *Sir Charles Coldstream* are ready to avouch that they "see nothing in it." If so, the best thing they can do is to keep their travelling impressions to themselves, and not intrude them on those who still feel a reverence for progress, and who earnestly desire to do their part in rendering the world better than it at present is. The task, we

are ready to grant, is a most difficult one, and is rendered still more difficult by the *cui bono* gentry, who care nothing for sentiment, but consider that a smart remark is the be all and end all of travel. We, however, who regard these matters in a different light, and, we trust, with a more reverent spirit, may be allowed to enter our protest against the writers of a school in which M. Didier affects to be an arch-teacher.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN ILLEGITIMATE DRAMA.

M. DUMAS FILS is evidently drifting into a tendency for putting things down, to which he devotes himself with an energy surpassing that of Sir Peter Laurie against the organ-grinders. Unfortunately, his efforts have not hitherto met with any success, save that of enriching the talented author. The *demi-monde* still flourishes, and speculators still flock to the Bourse despite the sad warnings the "Question d'Argent" held up to them. But M. Dumas was not to be daunted, and he has therefore selected another subject for popular representation, also touching on the evils of the day, and which has been received with immense applause, — so the French authorities on such matters tell us. As it is very unlikely that our readers will have an opportunity to estimate its value by a representation on an English stage, we purpose giving them a slight analysis of the story, and leave them to hold up their hands in pious horror that such things can form the subject of popular delectation across the Channel. The hero, ladies and gentlemen, is a natural son, and after that revelation, if you have the courage, you can follow us through the mazes of his career as described by M. Dumas *fils*.

The subject must necessarily be one of intense interest to the author, for it is notorious that he stands in the same position as the hero of his drama. Indeed, his father has confessed so much in his own Memoirs: "On the 29th of July, 1824, while the Duc de Montpensier was coming into the world, a Duc de Chartres was born to me, at No. 1, Place des Italiens." Now we know from the same source that the father was not married till some fifteen years later. However, Dumas *père* always behaved with great kindness to the lad, paying his school expenses, and magnanimously allowing him to take his name when his success at college showed the stuff that was in him. Papa fell into the habit of calling his son *son meilleur ouvrage*, and many people think him perfectly correct. Since then they have lived on terms of amity, only interrupted occasionally by the indiscreet revelations Dumas *père* would persist in making about family affairs through the columns of the *Mousquetaire*.

But while internally satisfied with his position, and appearing to take the goods the gods provided in a tranquil temper, the son does not seem internally satisfied with the false position into which his father's levity has thrust him. The wrong done him in his birthright must have been long gnawing at his heart-strings, and has at length found an issue in the indignant protest which we have now under consideration. As a psychological study, then, "Le Fils Naturel" is one of the most curious revelations recently laid before us, and every line exhales that bitterness which the author has

so long pent up. Of its merits as an acting drama we are unable to speak. In reading it does not appear so sparkling as its predecessors, but there is a degree of earnestness—we might almost call it solemnity—which possesses a certain charm. Of course, being the expression of French sentiments, it cannot but be exaggerated; but, take it all in all, it will not injure its author's well-merited reputation.

In the first act, which should be regarded as the prologue, we are introduced to *Clara*, daughter of poor country people, who has yielded to the dictates of her heart, and believed the glozing tales whispered in her ear by the young squire of the village. She is residing in Paris in a state of semi-matrimony, visited at rare intervals by her quasi-husband, and still happy in believing his promises and tending her boy, now three years of age. But a young woman residing in this fashion in Paris is regarded as fair game by the gallants, and among other aspirants her young landlord takes the field. He is very rich, and might be happy, were it not that he is certain of death within a short period; so he adheres to the axiom of a short life and a merry one, and spends his time in dissipation. In a conversation he holds with *Clara's* aunt, he makes various allusions to the state of his mind, and offers to employ *Clara* as embroideress. For, be it remembered, *Clara* is too proud to take money from the man who is not her husband, and prefers seeking her livelihood by honest industry. The following little bit is very sparkling:—

"*Lucien.* I suppose that embroidering does not bring in much?

"*Madame Gervais.* If persons like yourself, who give money so readily to women who do nothing, were to know what labour a woman who works has to go through before she can earn twenty francs, they would feel some remorse, by my faith! Their only excuse is that they do not know it.

"*Lucien.* Sell me some embroidery: I should like nothing better than to buy some.

"*Madame Gervais.* What use can you make of it?

"*Lucien.* For those ladies who do nothing. I would pay them in goods instead of money: they would be furious."

While *Clara* is making her simple preparations for the dinner, which her husband will eat with her that day, an old provincial friend, *Aristide*, makes his appearance. He is in high spirits, for he is about to marry his master's daughter, and take to the notarial business. His description of the courtship is capital:—

"*Clara.* As far as I can remember, she was pretty.

"*Aristide.* She is so still; prettier than ever. She has a *nez retroussé*, and I don't dislike those little noses that move when the mouth is speaking, they animate a face; and she is in good health—perfect country health—and is somewhat stout. But, when you love a woman, the more there is of her——And she is kind-hearted, and I mustn't joke with her about love, or she would cry. If she were to hear me now!

"*Clara.* You love her?

"*Aristide.* Oh! I adore her. She'll bring me a lot of plump children, round as apples—she'll suckle them

herself—and she'll look after the house—and there'll be plenty of linen in the presses—and she'll make preserves for the winter. Oh! she's just the girl I had dreamed of.

"*Clara.* And the father made no difficulties?

"*Aristide.* On the contrary, he offered her to me. He saw that we were in love. It was plain enough: we composed heavy poetry at night—Lord Byron by the *kilo*—we uttered sighs to rust the hinges. She said to her father: 'I love him—I want to marry him.' The father answered: 'Very good, marry him.' He took me on one side and said: 'My boy, I give you my daughter, and will sell you my office at half its value; you can pay me when it is in your power.' I ran to tell my father how matters stood, and he said: 'Aha! they want to humiliate me, do they?—wait a while!' and he settled forty thousand francs on me. But who'd believe that paper-hanging was so good a business?"

After this outbreak of personal satisfaction, *Aristide* proceeds to cross-question *Clara* as to her position, for he knows all the facts. As a lawyer and man of the world, he does not like *M. Sternay's* conduct, and believes that his repeated excuses to defer the marriage are evidences of a heartless design on his part. *Clara* defends her husband, but is soon to have the truth of *Aristide's* remarks proved. *Sternay* arrives and employs the old pretext, that family matters compel him to undertake a lengthened journey to America. He offers her a settlement of two thousand francs a year, and *Clara*, woman-like, believes all he says. So soon as

he is gone, however, *Lucien* comes in and tells *Clara* that *M. Sternay* is about to be married; she rushes off the stage in despair, and the curtain falls on the first act. When it rises again, an interval of twenty years is supposed to have elapsed, and we are brought into contact with the natural son. Things appear, however, to have gone more prosperously with him than with the majority of gentlemen in his situation, for he is in possession of a noble name and an ample fortune, being the while in blissful ignorance of his real position. Better than all, he is happy in the love of *Hermine*, niece of *M. Sternay*, to whom he has offered his hand with the assent of *Madame Sternay*. The following passage from a love-scene is charmingly and gracefully written:—

"*Hermine.* My mother often sang me that song, and 'Fleuve du Tage.'

"*Jacques.* That is an air reminding me of my childhood.

"*Hermine.* It is true, there are certain airs which appear like the ladder of remembrance, by means of which we descend into the most distant past. There is a tune which I can never recal without true emotion, 'Ma bonne Tante Marguerite.' When I hear it by chance, it summons up quite a picture before my eyes. It was the favourite song of my grandmamma, not the marchioness—the one who is to arrive to-day, she never sang in her life—but of my maternal grandmother, who died ten years ago. I fancy I can still see her by the side of the fire, with her beautiful white hair, which she

formed coquettishly into two rolls under her bright-ribboned cap. She was all gaiety. I would sit on a cushion at her feet; I rested my head on her knees, and fell asleep, lulled by that gently-sung melody. For a while, the conversation of grown-up persons—my father, mother, and friends—buzzed in my ear; then my mother would take me up in her arms, and I felt her lay me on my bed. She kissed me, and I returned it half asleep, then stammered my prayer, and fell off in sleep. Do you remember the same?

"*Jacques.* Yes; except that, so long as I can remember, my mother was always alone. She worked by my bedside; she lulled me to sleep with a gentle, melancholy tune, for she was often sad; and, like you, I passed from waking to sleep between two kisses.

"*Hermine.* How strange that men and women should all have the same recollections of childhood.

"*Jacques.* It is because childhood was the same for every being that has loved his mother, and has been loved by her.

"*Hermine.* Tell me, do you regret that such a time has passed away?

"*Jacques.* No. I like better my present age, when I feel, I see. I understand when my chagrin has a cause, and my joy a reason. When a man arrives at the height of his powers, and the maturity of his reason, and makes an accurate investigation of the great sensations of his mind and heart, why should he regret a period of ignorance and weakness, when nothing affected him, either joy or sorrow? Thus, I was quite a child when

I lost my father; I cannot even call him to mind; my mother told me so. Why, at an age when the sight of you causes me such intense joy, should I regret the age when I did not notice my father's death? No! believe me, man does not begin to live till he begins to comprehend.

"*Hermine.* And yet I, who lost my parents at an age when I had begun to comprehend what an intense loss I was undergoing, have continued to live, and have ended, if not by forgetting that double death, at least by familiarizing myself with this mournful reminiscence. Is not that ingratitude?

"*Jacques.* You have followed the law of nature, which forbids eternal regrets. Men and women have a multitude of duties to fulfil, which force them to look ever before them, and accustom themselves to the loss of their dearest affections. The world would have come to an end prematurely had the first child been unable to survive the first mother.

"*Hermine.* To me life is terrifying with the certainty that you cannot rest on anything. It is enough to make one despair of everything.

"*Jacques.* Why not profit by the day, because we know that night will arrive? why doubt of the spring, because we foresee a winter? why deny life on behalf of death? You are eighteen, I am twenty-three; I love you, you love me a little; the world is ours. Then, the years will bring with them the disenchantment of certain things, and, at the same time, the revelation of certain others; let the years do their part. We shall

grow old; we shall lull our children with songs they will recal some day, as we recalled so recently those of our parents; and full of youth, of strength, of love, as we are now, a day will come when we shall only be useful to play the part of grandpapa and grandmamma, loved for the sugar-plums in our pockets, until there will only be left of us two motionless portraits hanging on the wall of our grandchildren's room, who will become in their turn what we have been, and so in succession. Such is life in its most simple and regular expression. It appears gloomy when we bring the glowing enthusiasm of the present side by side with the cold habits of a future age; but when time, by the assistance of the gradations of which nature has imparted to it the secret, has quietly led us, resting on each other, to that other horizon, we shall be glad to rest ourselves; and if the offer were made us to recommence the journey, we should refuse.

"*Hermine.* It may be so; but I would sooner talk of the present or the past than of that great but gloomy future."

But the young lovers' hopes are destined to be nipped by the arrival of the old marchioness, *Sternay's* mother, who, as her brother the marquis says, looks like Louis XIV. in his garden of Versailles, and seems to be presenting arms to herself. Even the name of the aspirant to *Hermine's* hand appears to her suspicious: she never heard of a *M. de Boisceny*, although there was formerly a Boisrémy, first groom to Charles X. However, she presumes that the title came from the Empire, and that

his father gained some great battle.* An admirable sparring match then ensues between the marquis and his sister, in which the former reminds her that no great honour ought to be attached to their origin:—

"*The Marquis.* Come, my dear sister, we must have an explanation, once for all. You are a demoiselle D'Orgebac; we are both descended from the D'Orgebacs, and we boast, at least you do, about having royal blood in our veins, the great King Henri IV. having evinced his kindness, as they say, to one of our female ancestors. It is curious, by the way, that a woman's fault in a family should be a patent of nobility for her descendants. But things were arranged so, and personally I have no objection. With a little good-will we might, perhaps, have claims to the crown of France, but I believe it would be useless to put them in.

"*The Marchioness.* Go on—go on, pray; don't feel embarrassed.

"*The Marquis.* I would say, then, that during the revolution, the period of exile and misery, you made a present of your nobility and your hand to M. Sternay, the contractor.

"*The Marchioness.* Architect.

"*The Marquis.* Architect, if you like it, who is the father of your two sons, of whom one is a ship-builder, and the other died a general of division, which is highly

* What an admirable touch is this! The affectations of the old *régime*, which could not be expected to know the name of the Napoleonic triumphs, have never been so cauterised before. Such passages as these reveal the talent of the author more, even, than his most elaborate plots.

honourable. The latter was the father of Hermine; and I am bound to say that, when you know her, you will find her father's firmness of character in the daughter.

"*The Marchioness.* And a pretty present he made her.

"*The Marquis.* When the Empire came, you put on your visiting cards, 'Madame Sternay, *née* D'Orgebac;' when your husband died you only signed 'Marchioness d'Orgebac,' and ended by believing that your children were of the first nobility in France. It is an error, my poor sister,—it is even more, it is an absurdity—which is forgiven you because you are an old woman, and in France we are apt to forgive all sorts of absurdity; but when we are *en famille*, and a question arises as to the nobility of a claimant to Hermine's hand, you cannot demand too much, because you are a bourgeoise, and your children are bourgeois, and are not ashamed of it. It is I who am noble; only I have the right to bear the title and name of D'Orgebac, which would not be of the slightest use to me had I not had the excellent idea of making my fortune in India; and as I have no children, the great name of the D'Orgebacs, rendered so illustrious by the freaks of our ancestress Christine Angélique, Countess d'Orgebac, Lady of Parvilliers, and of other places, will become extinct on the day when I consent to die, nobles like myself only dying on the day when they think proper. Believe me, my sister, let us prove our nobility by our qualities, and not by exaggerating our nobility; do not be angry with your son for having attached his name to an honest trade—there are other defects to

criticise; and let us not examine M. de Boisceny too closely about the antiquity of his name. The important point is, whether he is an honest man, loves Hermine, and is loved by her in turn. It is the man that makes the title, and not the title the man. And with that I sit down, for I never spoke so much before, not even in the House of Peers, to which I belong, and to which you do not, my sister. What a disgrace!"

The marchioness's predictions are wonderfully fulfilled by the appearance of *Aristide*, who, in his official capacity of notary, tells her who *Jacques* really is, and tries in vain to persuade her into expiating the sin her son had committed by giving *Jacques* the hand of her niece, and thus tacitly receiving him into the family. *Jacques*, outraged by the secret now confided to him for the first time, learns from his mother that their money was left them by *Lucien*, with whom she lived as nurse, after indignantly rejecting the money *Sternay* had wished to settle on her. A stormy interview ensues with the father, who parades all the platitudes usually employed, and ends by declining to recognise his son legally. *Jacques*, crushed by the sudden weight of grief, assents to the justice of his remarks, and gives up all claim to *Hermine's* hand.

At the commencement of the third act we find *M. Sternay* retired from business, and ambitioning a political career. To aid his progress, however, he wishes to induce the old marquis to adopt him as his heir. Unaccountably, however, the marquis declines, and tells his nephew, point-blank, that he does not approve of his conduct to

his son. On *Sternay* naturally expressing his surprise that the old bachelor should entertain such moral views, the marquis replies firmly:—

"My dear fellow, I cannot reproach myself with ever having compromised a wife or dishonoured a daughter. Fortunately, I have always met with persons who had taken their precautions beforehand. I have only had *table d'hôte* amours. I eat of the dish handed to me by my neighbour on the right, passed it on to my neighbour on the left, and went my way."

The family assembles, and to their surprise in walks *Jacques* to take his leave of the marquis, prior to going abroad. To the horror of the marchioness, *Hermine* assures *Jacques* of her firm love to him, and quietly states that she shall await her majority, when she will marry him, if her relations do not give their consent before. She is haled off to her convent again *instanter*, leaving the stage to *Jacques* and his father. In the course of the conversation, *Jacques* surprises him by the information that he is secretary of a minister, and on the eve of starting for the East, whither an important mission has been entrusted to him. To add to *Sternay's* perplexities, the old marquis tells the circumstances of the case to his wife, who upbraids him for his reserve, and terrifies him by the statement that the marquis is strenuously inclined to adopt the natural son as his heir. A very amusing scene occurs, in which *Aristide* proves logically that *Sternay* has no legal right to his son, and that the marquis can adopt him at once. *Sternay* then offers a compromise. If the marquis will

adopt him, he is prepared to recognise *Jacques*, or, as *Aristide* tersely puts it, "Passez-moi le séné, je prendrai la rhubarbe." To this the marquis assents, and nothing is left but to find *Jacques* and inform him of his good fortune. But where is he? That, the fourth act will tell us.

On the curtain drawing up, we find the marchioness busily engaged in cajoling *Clara*, and offering her polite attentions, which *Aristide* regards with an air of suspicion, exposing his views as thus:—

"I have my own notions: I do not believe that at the age the marchioness has reached, old habits, and associations, and prejudices can be put aside, except from interested motives. She is flattering you—nothing else. She is not the woman to become good-hearted in a moment. A person who has not a heart when young, will never have one. The heart is not a winter fruit; it does not grow in the snow. Ah! If I were Jacques——

"*Clara.* Oh, pray, do not give him bad advice.

"*Aristide.* You can be calm; it would be the first time. I promised to say nothing, and will not; but you cannot prevent me from seeing and judging facts. M. Sternay did not recognise his son for twenty-five years. At the end of that time he consents to recognise him. Why? Because his son is in a position to do him honour, and because he gains his uncle's title. The marchioness, his mother, wished to have you turned out of her house when you came to protest against the abandonment of your child, and to-day she recognises Jacques as her grandson. And why? Because her brother

consents to give M. Sternay his title, and consequently his fortune, which amounts to six or seven hundred thousand francs. She has paid you four visits in the same number of days. Why did she not come sooner? Because she did not know, four days ago, what she has learned since, namely, that Jacques has fulfilled an important mission; that all the papers are talking of him; that he can cast renown upon the family; that he is well respected at court; and that by his influence anything required may be obtained. The marchioness, perhaps, loves her son—M. Sternay, perhaps, loves his mother—but that she loves you, or M. Sternay loves Jacques, no, no, a thousand times no! it is pride, calculation, ambition, anything you please, but not paternal love. I am a connoisseur in that. I know what it is to be a father. I am so often enough—you cannot tell me anything about it. I have spoken."

The couple are soon interrupted by the arrival of the marquis and *Sternay*, for the latter is most impatient to recognise his son. During *Jacques's* absence he has been telling all the world who he is, and feeling intense pride in his son. In reply to his exaggerated eulogium on *Jacques*, the marquis says:—

"I know not if your son, madame, has absolutely effected all that M. Sternay says, but he has certainly rendered a great service to his country. Everything may be expected from a man of heart, whom misfortune has gifted with courage and ambition. It is a further proof that we ought to estimate a man by his works alone, no matter what his origin may be. Who knows

if this child of the people, now running barefoot through the street with young scamps of his own age, will not add some day a discovery to the catalogue of humanity, or this poor little being, whom its mother carefully enters among the nameless children, may not bear in its brain the destiny of the world! God is everywhere; suffer Him to act, and let us not judge until He has terminated. The other evening the name of Jacques was mentioned at a party, and some one said, musingly, 'It seems that he is a natural son, whom his father would never acknowledge.' 'All the worse for his father,' said the English ambassador, who was present. When man is the son of his own deeds, he belongs to the best family in the world, and the name a man makes is frequently worth more than that handed down to him."

Much finessing takes place between *Clara* and *Sternay*, to induce the former to retire into obscurity for fear of compromising the interests of her son. She gladly consents to anything, so proud is she of her son being acknowledged by his father, but will make no response till she has consulted *Jacques*. Soon after, the son enters, and hears from his mother all the events that have occurred during his absence. He tells her that he has selected a distant consulate as the reward of his services, and asks her if she be ready to accompany him. We need not say how gladly she consents. But there is a hitch: can she allow her son to give up his brilliant prospects merely for the sake of her selfish gratification? The doubt is resolved by *Jacques* himself, in a scene he

has with the family. He appears sufficiently ungrateful not to appreciate the distinguished honour done him by his male parent. He leaves it to *Hermine* to decide for him whether he shall take the name offered him, or be satisfied with the one he had made for himself.

"*Jacques.* Since the day when I was emboldened to tell you that I loved you, Hermine, many unexpected events have crossed my track. At the period when I first knew you, I fancied I had nothing in the world to do but love you.

"*Hermine.* Do you no longer love me?

"*Jacques.* On the contrary, I love you more. But I have grown ten years older during the last eighteen months. I am no longer a man of the world: I am no longer a young man, despite my age. I am a labourer, perhaps a struggler. I no longer belong to my feelings alone, I belong to my country, which rewards, in an exaggerated manner, the services I have been so fortunate as to render her. I must live far from France, from the associations and affections of your youth. Is not this too much to ask of you?

"*Hermine.* Have I not lived in a convent for eighteen months, awaiting the day when I could become your wife? and, between ourselves, the convent was not particularly amusing. Do you believe that during that period I have not reflected nor guessed that there was a grief to console in your heart, a mystery to respect in your life, and that I must love you—not more, for that was impossible—but better—you understand me, do you not?—and that I must be more than your wife—must

be your friend. I have thought deeply, Jacques, I repeat it, and I believe I am the companion you need.

"*Jacques.* Now it is my duty to tell you of the misfortune you have foreboded. The man you love, Hermine, is a natural child. My mother was never married, my father never acknowledged me as his son. That is the reason why the marchioness opposed our marriage. She reproached me with my birth, and found it unpardonable. Do you now consent that my mother should call you her daughter?

"*Hermine.* She is your mother, Jacques—I require to know no more.

"*Jacques.* And now give me your advice. My father still lives. He forgot me for more than twenty years; he offers me his name to-day. Ought I to accept that name, and the title that accompanies it, or retain my mother's name?

"*Hermine.* You must pardon your father, Jacques, because it is our duty to forgive everybody; but you must keep the name which you have already rendered distinguished, and which you will make more so. This name, when borne by you, is your mother's absolution, and the reward for what she has done for her son. For my part I require no other, so proud am I of it."

Poor *M. Sternay* is humiliously defeated; all his plans appear blown to the winds by this breach of the agreement he had proposed to make. But *Jacques* was a generous enemy. Knowing how much his father desired a patent of nobility, he had accepted that distinction for him from the minister. Such is the revenge

ne takes for twenty-five years of neglect; and the curtain, we may assume, falls on a very graceful tableau, such as French stage-managers produce with much artistic skill and taste.

There can be no doubt that the plot of this singular play is very admirably worked out, and though it may be alleged that the author has an easy fight of it, being able to turn the arguments *pro* and *con* at his good pleasure, still we cannot gainsay the remarkable talent displayed. We regard it as the most thoughtful and finished of M. Dumas *fils*' productions; and though it is possible it may not meet with all the success that accompanied its predecessors, this will result not from any defect on the part of the author, but rather from the limited field in which the interest is concentrated. At any rate, the diction is far more chaste than that prevalent in the former plays, and leads us to indulge in the hope that when M. Dumas *fils* has safely emerged from the boisterous pleasures of youth, he will live to become one of the greatest writers his country, so fertile in great writers, has hitherto produced.

CHAPTER XIV.

ROUGE ET NOIR.*

THIS is the way he wrote down his name at the last census: "Jean-Pierre Bitterlin, of Lunéville, 60 years of age; 35 years' active service, 11 campaigns, 2 wounds; captain 1834, chevalier 1836, retired in 1847; medal of St. Helena." Such is the way he described himself; but M. About's portrait of the inner man, though not flattering, is far more photographic: "He possessed a most loyal, frank, and delicate character, which, at the same time, was the most bitter, jealous, and ill-tempered in the world." As for his external qualities, he wore a moustache, which no cosmetic in the world would render lissom, and which, black as jet on Sunday morning, grew gradually gray by Thursday; while his hair, thanks to the perruquier's skill, ever maintained its raven gloss; all that betrayed his age were the small tufts of gray hair that peeped out of his ears.

Yet Captain Bitterlin ought to have had no reason to be continually cross, for he did not, apparently, suffer from indigestion. As a boy, he had been the happiest drummer in the French army at the battle of Leipzig,

* Trente et Quarante.—Sans Dot.—Les Parents de Bernard. Par E. About. Paris: Hachette et Cie. 1859.

and never slept without dreaming of the traditional marshal's *bâton*. He earned his first epaulette at Waterloo, though he did not get it till nine years later in Spain. During that interval he had often felt inclined to retire, and plant his native cabbages ; but, though he was dissatisfied, and a sergeant to boot, he had never plotted. Gaining his captaincy by seniority, at the age of thirty-six, he proceeded to Africa, and came back with a dysentery : he was sent to patch himself up at Briançon, where he married a restaurateur's daughter, as a pleasant mode of passing the time. No sooner married than he was ordered to join the depôt at Strasburg, his wife following in the baggage train. In 1839 he became the father of a girl, born betwixt the three hundred and tenth and three hundred and eleventh milestone on the Strasburg road. Unfortunately, his wife was young and coquettish, and allowed herself to be made love to without meaning any harm. After passing through the agonies of jealousy, and killing a comrade who annoyed him with his jokes, the captain determined on retiring when he was forty-nine. He set up his Lares in the Marais, on an income of about 5000 fr. a year, and the solitude settled madame in four years; as M. About profoundly remarks, "the angels themselves would have grown weary of tending the captain in his desert."

The captain was inconsolable at the loss of the only domestic animal he had to bully ; but the pangs wore off when the last war aroused his martial instincts. The greatest blow the gallant captain ever received was, that

Sebastopol should be taken without him, for he had been anxiously expecting that the minister for war would send for him, as the only man capable of finishing the campaign properly. Hence, when the capture of the Malakoff took place, he was so agitated by it, that fat Agathe, his maid-of-all-work, compassionately asked him whether the government had deprived him of a portion of his property, and if it would not be advisable to put down one dish at breakfast in consequence. At times the captain would certainly remember that he was a father; but it only ended by exasperating him, for he could not make up his mind whether his wife had been unfaithful to her vows. Besides, when he went to see the little Emma at St. Denis, he found her so ugly that he felt no interest in her. And yet, strange to say, when she suddenly burst forth into a lovely girl, this annoyed the captain the more, for so great was the trouble the care of her would entail upon him, that he declared her beauty was really indecent.

Such a treasure as this the suspicious captain must keep from mortal eye; hence, he broke off all Emma's school acquaintances, and only allowed her to go out with Agathe to church. Little did the poor man suspect this was the very way to lose his daughter. One morning, as she was returning from church, she was insulted by a parcel of schoolboys, when suddenly a very handsome young man came to her rescue, and bore her away to his lodgings in a fainting state.

He was a young Italian, of good family, Bartolomeo Narni, ex-Count de Miranda, who had fought bravely during the siege of Rome; and, after mortgaging his

estate and title, he had retired to Paris, his whole fortune consisting of his family portrait-gallery, which he could not bear to part with. Up to the present he had earned his livelihood as reader to an Italian printer, but, now that love took full possession of his senses, like a true Italian, he could not do anything but think of his love. Of course, Emma, who never saw any young men, gave her heart to her champion, and for her part dreamed pleasantly about the future, though not a word was dropped to the captain, who would probably have gone mad at the thought. Their only chance of meeting was at church, where, as M. About remarks, "the mass they heard was not placed to their credit in the ledger of paradise." Still they were happy, and Meo invented a way of communication which, for its originality, deserves extract:—

"There are theatre bills in the arcade connecting the Rue des Vosges with the Place Royale. Every morning, between eleven and twelve, the Italian went there, and underlined with a pencil the letters which formed a sentence addressed to Emma. It was a game of patience, but Meo had employed it before in corresponding with his friends at Bologna, by means of an old number of the *Débats*. Emma went out with her father, and stopped like a child, before the play-bills. How could the captain refuse her such an innocent amusement? The first bill would run thus:—

"Comédie Française.

"Jeudi, 25 Mai, 1858.

"Les comédiens ordinaires de l'Empereur donneront 'Gabrielle.'"

"Emma easily deciphered *Ma Jolie*, and carried on the same game till she reached the Théâtre Beaumarchais."

The captain had reasons for liking this stoppage: for he, too, would cast a glance on the bills, which enabled him to give Emma a fine moral lecture. He showed her that authors are obliged to invent scandalous titles to attract the public to the theatre, and preached to her utter contempt of plays. "You are very lucky," he would say, "at only knowing these extravagances by name. Look here: 'Le Fils Naturel'—why, that is scandalous! 'Le Fruit Défendu'—that is immoral; 'Le Joie fait Peur'—that is ridiculous; 'Les Lionnes Pauvres'—what can that be but a history without head or tail, and probably indecent in the bargain? The scamps who write plays can't earn a living, and serve 'em right." Emma merely replied by marking the corner of the last bill with the dusty end of her parasol, as a sign to her lover that she had deciphered the billet, and thus was the poor captain tricked beneath his very nose.

At length, Emma's passion became so intense that she could no longer conceal it from her father, and so she confessed her great secret, and though the captain laid it down as a rule that children should only be managed by kindness, on this occasion his wrath was superior to his theory. The poor girl received a couple of tremendous boxes on the ear, and was locked up in her room, while Agathe was bundled out neck and crop, under the natural suspicion of being an accomplice. As for Emma, the

captain swore she should remain under arrest till she made a full confession of her crimes, but she declared with equal firmness that, so long as she was kept a prisoner, she would remain dumb.

In such a scandal-loving quarter as the Marais, the most astounding reports soon spread about the captain's barbarity, and the family doctor thought it his duty to call and inquire. After seeing Emma, he candidly told her father he was killing her by inches, and that she required change of air and scene. Hence the captain, much to his regret, was forced to leave his household gods and travel with his perverse daughter. But not unaccompanied: Meo, who was constantly prowling round the house, saw him one evening copying a poster on the wall, and on reading it after him he found it was a pleasure trip through Switzerland and the Grand Duchy of Baden. Emma started for Switzerland "like cowards go into action, looking back every step." Unable to communicate with her lover, she still hoped he would be acquainted with their movements, and follow them: nor was she mistaken, for, to her ineffable delight, Meo took the eighth seat in the railway carriage. So soon as the captain slept, the young couple began their mutual confessions. Unfortunately for Meo, he had started on a wrong tack. He intended to be most courteous to the captain and win his good graces, but he ought to have treated him roughly, having to deal with a man who commenced his pleasure trip in this way at the Hôtel des Trois Rois, at Basle:—

"M. Bitterlin was not yet served. He went from the

dining-room to the terrace, unable to choose a table or order breakfast. The head waiter and the landlord both pressed him, and were unable to satisfy him. 'Listen to me,' he said, 'I wish to breakfast, not like a glutton who makes a god of his belly, or like that gentleman who looks like an ox in a stall. Still, I must restore myself after my night's travel. 'I am not afraid of expense, and I should blush to breakfast like that mean student, who is dipping a slice of bread in his coffee.'"

"'We have, sir,' the landlord said, 'salmon, trout, crayfish,'" &c.

"'Is your fish fresh, though? I know your tricks of passing on travellers all the carps that came out of Noah's Ark. Besides, the sauce makes the fish, and you fellows never knew how to compose one. It is a French science, so you can keep your fish to yourself.'"

"The head waiter went on: 'In game we have roebuck, chamois, hare, partridges. The shooting season began this morning.'"

"'No thank you—killed this morning. Perhaps you will like me to eat the soles of boots.'"

"'In butcher's meat we have roast mutton and beef, kidneys, cutlets,'" &c.

"'Yes, and I bet you put onion in everything.'"

Here he approached an inoffensive traveller, who was eating a duck and onions with considerable appetite.

"'Are you going to eat that stuff, sir?'"

"'Well, sir?'"

"'And you will perhaps say it is an exquisite dish.

Well, opinions are free, especially as the animals of this canton indulge in the luxury of a republic. But, allow me to say, in my turn, that a man must have a most perverted taste to eat such rubbish, and call it good in the bargain.'"

And here the gallant captain ordered the waiter to bring him what he liked, and the meal went on tolerably serenely, except that the butter was not fresh (in Switzerland!), and he threw a doubtful plate at the waiter's head, with this comment: "I am not fastidious. I have drunk horse broth out of a cuirassier's helmet. But here I represent the great army of France, and the slightest neglect is an insult. You see the river that runs below your barrack: it belonged to me. I conquered it with my comrades."

Within twenty-four hours the captain had a special object of aversion in the Italian, who would insist on paying him polite attentions. Still the party proceeded onwards, the captain abusing the inevitable trout till they reached Lucerne, where the principal sight, according to our author, is "honest plantigrade Swiss, lounging about in their Sunday clothes, and pretty English girls holding up their gowns to display their red petticoats." At Schaffhausen, where the party broke up for a short period, M. Bitterlin had an opportunity of expressing all his horror of gambling, for he had never touched a card in his life, always acting on the golden rule when asked to play: "I am not poor enough to need your money, nor rich enough to make you a present of mine;" and he concluded by an

assertion that such dens of iniquity as Baden-Baden ought to be put down. Another of the party took up the cudgels and defended public gambling in a very specious manner.

However plausible his arguments might have been, they did not alter the captain's decision. He laughed at the fascinations of *rouge et noir*, and at length declared he *would* go to Baden and prove that one man, at any rate, could be firm. With these doughty resolutions, the French gentleman, whose name was M. le Roy, and Meo took leave of the captain, who promised to follow them to Baden in a few days and prove the firmness of a French soldier.

On reaching Baden, Meo soon yielded to the temptation. He played with varying luck for two or three nights, and had staked his last Louis, when, accidentally turning his head, he saw the ferocious Captain Bitterlin standing behind him. Horrified at being thus detected by the father of his Emma, who had so inveighed against gambling, the young man turned and fled. The captain had time, however, to recognise him, and said to himself, with lofty contempt, "A rotten pear: he has not the courage of his vice. Why, he has forgotten his twenty francs—twenty francs at one stake! two hundred pounds of ammunition bread." However, he determined to have a hearty laugh when the Louis was lost, but unfortunately the black gained, and Meo's Louis received a companion.

"Well, after all," the Captain thought, "the young humbug will lose at the second round." But he was

mistaken, and the Captain saw eighty francs before him. He regarded with contempt this gold, stained with the curse of gambling. It was quite new, and glistened in the lamplight; and, on seeing the coins, the captain thought involuntarily of the first four Louis he ever possessed. They were twenty-four franc pieces of yellow gold, very old, very worn, and rather clipped. His mother had taken them out of a stocking, and slipped them into his hand when he went to the wars. "What a difference," he thought, "between these immoral counters and those respectable medals which my mother had sanctified by labour and economy." This reflection was interrupted by the rake bringing him four more Louis. This aroused a fresh train of thought. "Parbleu! there's the justice of fortune. When I was second captain, I had to fight a whole month to gain the sum this young scoundrel has got by three turns of the cards. Fortunately, there's thirty-nine for the black—and, no! there's forty for the red. Two months of my pay in M. Narni's pocket."

So things went on: the black passed continually, till the captain had two hundred and odd Louis before him, and the room was becoming excited. Already three or four pretty women had come to borrow five Louis of the captain, and he had received them like a boar would the hounds; at length the black had passed again and left before him a total of five thousand one hundred and twenty francs. This multiplication of gold scandalized him! five thousand francs—one year of his income gained in a few moments! A servant brought him a

chair, but, though he said he was not playing, he gradually sank into it. The banker began dealing again, and gave the black thirty-one. M. Bitterlin noticed the scowling face of this person, and thought there would be a noble and chivalrous pleasure in winning from these immoral enterprises. And when he had ten thousand francs before him, he regarded himself as a champion of virtue, who had gained a victory over the demon of play. At length the banker asked, "How much *à la masse?*"

"I—I don't know," the captain replied, redder than a hundred crayfish. "I—do not play—my—principles——"

"You are aware, sir," said a croupier near him, "that the maximum is six thousand francs."

In vain did the captain look round for Meo, who carefully kept out of his way; but as he could not keep the game waiting, he stammered, "Six thousand francs, sir—I—I believe so, at least. It is not I——"

His hand trembled; he counted six notes, left them on the black, and drew back the rest of the money. The touch of this treasure produced a species of dizziness; a swarm of gilt butterflies began dancing round his head; he held on to the table and closed his eyes. A cry of amazement around him: black had passed for the tenth time.

So things went on until all at once the red gained, and the captain was quite fascinated by the demon of play. He must win back the six thousand francs he had lost for M. Narni, and then he would leave off.

Unfortunately, though, these six thousand francs followed the others, and this was enough to exasperate the old gentleman. He returned to the charge; gained, then lost; with his hands filled with gold and notes he punted, now on the red, then on the black, or on the colour, according to the inspiration of the moment.

At last the game was over; the bank was broken, and the captain held 121,240 fr., which belonged to M. Narni. Then came the revulsion; he must find the young Italian and hand him over the accursed money, which seemed to burn his pockets, and he rushed off, regardless of the crowd that pursued him, to Meo's hotel. But he was not to be found; for hours the captain walked up and down in front of the Victoria, expecting him to come in; but Meo had by this time reached Strasburg, *en route* for Paris, and M. Bitterlin went back to Emma with a heavy heart.

Lover though he was, Meo had read in the father's face sufficient to tell him that this gain would not help him in obtaining Emma's hand; and he thought it very probable that M. Bitterlin would throw the money at his head, and say, "That is yours; it cost you a Louis, and me my honour. Now, good night!" And as Meo had no desire for matters to end thus, he thought it better to get back to Paris and await the result there.

M. Bitterlin, too, was equally decided on returning to Paris and hiding his shame; all he wanted to do was to get rid of the money, and then he might feel easier in his mind. But even at Paris his fame had preceded him; "Our Own Correspondent" had sent the news

home; and the poor captain was driven out of his mind. His door was besieged by hungry speculators, or founders of an anonymous company offered him a situation of 200,000 fr. a year on condition of his depositing 60,000 fr. as security. A commander of unknown orders offered him a grand ribbon nearly like that of the Legion of Honour. Then shoeless projectors pledged themselves to triple his fortune in a fortnight. In short, it only depended on the captain to start the mushroom coffee and the haricot-bean sugar, the umbrella-pipe, the toilette-piano, and the saucepan-helmet, precious utensil in peace, and an incomparable arm in war. The captain felt himself rapidly going mad; his only chance of safety was to find Meo, and so he applied to the police for assistance, who laughed at him. However, when he reached home, he found a note to inform him where Meo lived, written, to tell the truth, by the young gentleman himself. Off the captain rushed, but, to his horror, Meo would not accept the money; he said, and indeed proved, most logically, that it belonged to M. Bitterlin, and he could not think of taking it; so to end the controversy, the captain threw the money on the table and made his escape. For the rest of the day he was most agreeable, took Emma for an airing, but, when he retired to bed, he began raving like a madman—he had found the 120,000 fr. waiting for him on his pillow.

The next morning the captain started off again to Meo, but the young gentleman was just as resolute, though he allowed there was one way of settling matters,

which, however, he must decline. On being pressed, he said he alluded to a marriage with Emma, on whom the money could be settled, but that did not suit his views. This was enough to set the captain off raving; he insisted upon knowing why Meo thought an alliance with *his* family derogatory, and on the young man persisting in his silence, challenged him, which challenge Meo at once accepted.

Naturally enough, the captain applied to some of his old comrades in the 104th Line to act as his seconds, while, by a curious coincidence, M. Narni selected as his second the colonel of the same regiment, whose acquaintance he had formed at Rome. To him he confided all the circumstances, and the colonel very willingly joined him in his plot.

When the opponents met the next morning at Vincennes, and just as they were about to salute, the colonel interposed, and begged to ask whether the quarrel could not be amicably settled. After some argument, the captain was caught in the trap by Meo assenting to marry his daughter. However, by pretending that he wished to defer the marriage, he diverted the captain's suspicions, and got him into that state of obstinacy, that he insisted on the marriage coming off in a fortnight, or he would ask the reason why. He also insisted that Meo should visit Emma every day, that she might get used to him. But the lovers were far too careful to let him see they had met before, and the captain was in a fool's paradise, as he had an opportunity of keeping an

eye on Meo lest he might be off to Italy before the marriage took place.

At length the great day arrived: Meo and Emma were married, and the captain gave a great feast, to which all the seconds were invited, when he became gloriously boozy; so much so, that the family doctor, also present, asked him if he ever had himself bled, as he had an apoplectic tendency, to which the captain replied, in an inimitable voice, "Never, sir. I only shed my blood before the enemy!"

Emma had been married a fortnight, and was happy to a degree, though very careful to hide it from her father, as she knew by experience how much the happiness of others annoyed him. The young countess was growing lovelier every day in the rays of the honeymoon, "for the beauty of woman is a delicate fruit; it blossoms almost anywhere, but it only ripens on an espalier, when leaning on a husband." The happiness that makes philosophers extravagant (see M. Michelet's last work) sometimes restores sense to mad people, and this was the case with Meo; and he began to do without rings and chains for himself, in order to present his wife with a Cashmere shawl.

Agathe, the indefatigable creature, now restored to favour, divided herself between the captain's rooms and the nest of the young couple, and it was her stupidity that killed her master. One day, as she was dusting the sitting-room, the captain, wearied of being all alone, said to her:—

"I must confess that, for a pious woman, you behaved very queerly."

"I, sir?" she replied, shouldering arms with the feather broom.

"Why, did you not help your young mistress with her first gallant? I kicked you out for that."

"What first gallant?"

"The one whose name I never could learn."

"You know it now, then, for it was M. Narni. What!" she added, with surprise, "you *didn't* believe my mistress could love two men? No, no, master, there never was but one, and he must have managed famously to make you swallow the pill."

The captain thought more in one minute than he had ever done in his life, but he did not feel at all comfortable, for the blood rushed to his head with the ideas. He saw in a moment that he must be laughed at by the whole of the 104th, from the colonel down to the drummer-boys; there had been a huge conspiracy to humbug him, and in his rage he went off in a fit of apoplexy, from which he did not think it worth while to recover. The family doctor, when called in, could scarce refrain from a cry of delight. "It is a great misfortune for the family, but I was in the right."

Emma and Meo are in deep mourning, and weep from morning till night. The poor children will probably never be consoled for an event which ensures their happiness.

CHAPTER XV.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS IN ST. PETERSBURG.*

It is nearly thirty years back since Alexandre Dumas I. bound himself by a solemn pledge to his readers that he would perform the periplus of the Mediterranean, and spite of the bad jokes this promise entailed on him, he has kept his word like a man. Up to the present he has made four voyages or tours of inspection about the littoral of the Middle Sea, and expended for that purpose fifty-one thousand francs, from which deduct ten thousand francs, granted him by the Minister of Public Instruction. What he saw he has described, as we all know, famously in some thirty volumes; but he has still a portion of his task to accomplish. He has yet to visit Greece, Turkey, Asia Minor, and the adjoining countries; and although the managers of the Messageries Impériales, so soon as they heard of his scheme, offered him free passage for self and secretary, he must have a yacht, for he was not going to make an every-day tour. His soul was thirsting for combats with truculent pirates in the sunny Ægean, and he had hopes of meeting with his Haïdée, for which consummation he, too, was ready to endure a shipwreck. Hence

* De Paris à Astrakan. Par Alexandre Dumas. Tomes I.—II.

M. Dumas very wisely ordered a three-mast lugger of sixty-five tons, entirely made of cast steel, with a ten-horse-power engine. Unfortunately, the builder, though the first in France, required five months to build the vessel, and during that period Alexandre I. was doomed to inactivity. Under these circumstances he accepted an invitation to be present at a wedding in St. Petersburg, and thought he might as well come back *viâ* Astrakan. This excursion gave birth to the new romance of travel, to a portion of which we propose calling our readers' attention.

The Russian Count Koucheleff Bezborodko, while making the grand tour, remained for a while at Paris, where he had the felicity of making M. Dumas's acquaintance. An intimacy sprang up between them which led to the historian being invited to be present at the marriage of Count Koucheleff Bezborodko's sister, as we before stated. There was nothing surprising in the fact of a young lady being married, but the bridegroom was a celebrity, being no other than the renowned spirit-rapper Home. How could Dumas refuse such an invitation, or the temptation to make a chapter or two out of the bridegroom's history? which he does something after the following fashion:—Home—Daniel Douglas Home—was born at Currer, near Edinburgh, in 1833. His mother, prior to his birth, had a vision, in which she saw him seated at table with an emperor, an empress, a king, and a grand-duchess, which was, of course, eventually realised. At the early age of three years he began indulging in second sight, and must have been rather an uncom-

fortable boy to live with, for he was continually predicting deaths, which came about with perfect accuracy. At the age of ten, however, fearing that the boy's gifts would be wasted at home, his parents transferred him to America, where his talent soon became fully developed. So sure as he gained a new friend, so surely did he predict his death before long, and, finally, his mother became the object of his visions. But this was not all; he began to be tormented by spirits, who evinced their presence by the usual rappings. Some clergymen were called in to exorcise the demon, but were utterly foiled, and Home's fortune was made. The Americans flocked in to see him, but his aunt, whom he lived with, growing tired of the perpetual polking of the chairs and tables, shovel and tongs, frying-pan and kettle, turned him out of doors. At last, the spirits finding his company rather slow, deserted him *en masse;* but he became, instead, a somnambulist. After amassing enormous sums at Boston, his health failed him, and he proceeded to recruit on the Continent. At Florence he became the occasion of an *émeute:* it was a very long time since a sorcerer had been burned in that city, and the worthy people desired to make an example of the American. He managed to escape to Naples, where the spirits left him once more, "on urgent private affairs," on the 10th of February, 1856, with a promise of returning that day year punctually. Home now thought it time to take some precautions, and went to Rome, where he became a Catholic, and was honoured by an interview with the Pope, on condition that he came in the company of a priest. It is

evident from this that Pio Nono was not quite assured of his power over the spirits. From Rome the magician went back to Paris, and consulted Father Râvignan on the subject of his spirits. The father consoled him by stating that since he had become a Catholic the spirits had been exorcised, but Home could not believe this; the spirits were Scotch, and, consequently, horribly obstinate. They had promised to come back, and would keep their word; and so they did. Of course it was not long ere Home was invited to the Tuileries, where he effected wonders, if we believe only half the stories that were current about him. At any rate, the empress adopted his sister as a mark of her satisfaction with him. From Paris, Home proceeded to Baden-Baden, where he held six séances. Soon after an old English lady died, leaving him six thousand a year, and he was enabled to become a gentleman at large. He went once more to Rome in the beginning of 1858, where he formed the acquaintance of Count Koucheleff, and eventually fell in love with his sister. Soon after the return of the count and his party to Paris, Home desired to know the great Dumas, who was introduced to him by the count and countess. As was perfectly natural, they formed a tremendous affection for the great historian of France, and insisted on his accompanying them to Petersburg. For a while he refused, but as the count declared he would break off the match with Home unless Dumas consented to go, how could he refuse? This explanation was necessary to prove the falsehood of the assertions that M. Dumas went to Russia to write a new piece for the

Théâtre-Français, or to acquire the collar of St. Stanislaus.

We regret we cannot find space for the description of the journey to Berlin, in which our author gives a most humorous account of the dilemma in which the Prussian conductors are placed by a favourite cat, about whose proper mode of conveyance no regulations are laid down. They know exactly what to do with dogs, but the other animal was a novelty to them. After a grand consultation, however, they consented to let it ride with the countess. At Berlin, owing to the fulness of the hotel, M. Dumas and his secretary were obliged to sleep in a bath-room. We note this fact, not so much for its curiosity, but because the world likes to know the smallest movements of its emperors and kings: then why should we not chronicle such a simple event in the life of the kaiser of literature? On board the steamer running from Stettin to Cronstadt, M. Dumas naturally formed the acquaintance of the traditional Englishman, who was going to Bornea to see the sun at midnight on the 24th of June, the only night of the year on which the phenomenon is possible. He had made the same voyage the year before, but enjoyed such a comfortable sleep on that memorable night that he could not make up his mind to get up, so he deferred the treat for another year. How curious it is, by the way, that only Frenchmen fall in with these *Anglais pour rire;* we have probably travelled about Europe rather more than M. Dumas, and yet we do not remember once meeting with a single specimen of English fatuity, such as always run in the way of Frenchmen. But possibly we are prejudiced.

On board the steamer, M. Dumas also formed the acquaintance of a Prince Galitzin, a family so numerous in Russia that they are numbered. Thus a czar said to one of them: "Why, you are numbered like the fiacres." "Yes," was the smart reply, "and like kings, sire." The sight of Cronstadt leads M. Dumas off at once into a history of Peter the Great, of which we can only say that what is true is not new, what is new is not true. We will quote one anecdote, however, to show that M. Dumas's right hand has not forgotten its cunning, even in writing Russian history:—

"The Strelitz had formed a conspiracy against Peter, and it was arranged that they should fire a house: Peter would run up at the first glare of the flames, and would mingle with the crowd to extinguish it. A blow of a dagger will put an end to him, and to all those heretics with whom he pollutes the sacred soil of Russia.

"Midnight is chosen for the hour of execution.

"At eleven they will meet to sup: wine and strong liquors will not be spared. Strength must be given to those whose courage might fail.

"But, before supper, two of the accomplices lose heart: they ask to be introduced to the Czar, and confess all to him.

"Peter takes his measures. He summons the captain of his guard, and orders him to surround the house where the conspirators are to meet, at half-past eleven precisely.

"When they are taken, he will appear in the midst of them and decide their fate.

"The Czar, however, deceives himself: his impatience makes him advance the time. He fancies he gave orders to his captain to enter the house at eleven, and he himself proceeds thither at a quarter-past eleven. He finds all the members of the plot perfectly free, the glass in their hands, the sword by their sides.

"It is the Czar who is trapped.

"Fortunately, the lion has at times the mask of the fox.

"He advances among the astonished guests, with a smile on his lips.

"'Comrades,' he says, 'I heard the sound of glasses through the walls; I saw the lights through the crevices of the shutters; I thought you were amusing yourselves here. Make room for a boon companion.'

"And the Czar seated himself amongst the amazed conspirators.

"He pours out some wine, and raises his glass. 'Come,' he says, 'drink to my health.'

"And the future assassins of the Czar are forced to drink to the health of the Czar.

"But the surprised guests soon recover; menacing glances are exchanged; Providence has done more for them than they could ever desire. The victim has come to place himself beneath the sword of the executioners.

"Tsikler leans over to Soukanin, and, with his dagger half drawn, says:—

"'Brother, it is time!'

"But Soukanin's courage fails him.

"'Not yet,' he says.

"Peter hears, at the same moment, the reply and the regular footfall of an armed band surrounding the house.

"'Not yet!' he repeats. 'If it is not yet time for thee, son of a dog, it is so for me.'

"And rushing on Soukanin, he hurls him to the ground with a blow in the face.

"An immense hurrah is raised; all the conspirators draw their poniards. However herculean may be the strength of the giant, he must inevitably succumb; they are twenty armed men against one defenceless man.

"But at this moment the door opens, and the guards appear on the threshold.

"'At last!' Peter says, rising to his full height.

"At the Czar's burst of laughter and gestures the conspirators understand that they are lost.

"Without attempting to defend themselves, they fall on their knees.

"'Chains!' the conqueror says, laconically.

"Then turning to the officer of the guards:—

"'Ah!' he says, 'that is how you are exact!'

"And he gives him a box on the ears.

"The officer calmly produces the order from his pocket. Peter reads, 'At half-past eleven precisely.' He looks at his watch; it is half-past eleven.

"With the rapid intelligence, or rather heart of all great men, he recognises his wrong, presses the officer in his arms, embraces him thrice in the Russian fashion, and makes him guardian of the conspirators.

"The culprits were put to the question, not that they should confess, for the crime was patent, but that they

might suffer all they could possibly suffer; then they were mutilated by tearing them limb from limb. At last death arrived in its turn, but not so long as enough blood and life remained to endure pain.

"Finally, their heads were exposed on the top of a column, and their limbs arranged around them like an ornament."

On the final conspiracy of the Strelitz and their overthrow, seven thousand of them were condemned to death. They were enclosed in a palisade, around which two hundred gibbets were erected, each calculated to hold ten men. The Czar was seated on a throne, with the princes and dignitaries below him. The culprits were brought out by tens, the Czar keeping the tally: in this way two thousand were disposed of. Then their heads were cut off, the Czar performing the feat on the first hundred with his own hands: during his apprenticeship to the carpentering trade he learned how to handle an axe. Then he distributed one hundred axes among his suite, and bade them do their part. Only one Strelitz escaped the massacre, a handsome young man of two-and-twenty, Joan, surnamed Orell, or the Eagle. On taking him to the block he noticed a corpse stopping the way. "You must make room for me," he said, "as it is my turn." And he kicked the body away. This coolness struck Peter. "I pardon that man," he shouted to the executioner: he was then attached to a line regiment, and gained his commission. His son Gregory, general and governor of Novgorod, left in turn five sons, who eventually became the brothers Orloff.

Instructive, but quite inadmissible to our pages, is the life-history of Catherine I., which M. Dumas tells with wondrous graphic power. He proves very clearly that at the time when the Princesses Anne and Elizabeth, the future empresses, were born, Catherine's first husband was still living, while Peter's spouse, Eudoxia, had not yet been divorced. However, as our author philosophically observes, Louis XIV. set the fashion to the world then, and Peter imitated him in many respects. Among the prisoners captured at Pultawa was the soldier who had been Catherine's husband for two days. On hearing of her elevation, he plucks up a spirit, and tells the keeper of the prison all about it. He had better have kept quiet, for when the report was sent in to Peter, he wrote at the bottom, "The man is mad: do not hurt him. Treat him like the other prisoners." And so he went to Siberia, where he died in 1721, and then, for the first time, Peter publicly recognised Catherine as his wife. Very suspicious, too, is M. Dumas as to the price Catherine paid to the grand vizier for the treaty of Bender, when the Russian army ran a risk of being exterminated by the Turks; but Peter was too great a man to care for such trifles. Here is a curious remark bracketed into the text:—

"The heads of the two rivals, Charles XII. and Peter, may still be seen, for casts of them were taken. The head of Peter is that of a genius: it resembles the head of Napoleon. The head of Charles XII. is that of an idiot: it resembles the head of Henry III."

Our author cannot in any way account for the fury

into which Peter was thrown on finding that Catherine was deceiving him with her chamberlain, Moëns de la Croix. Her antecedents certainly did not prove any excess of moral purity on her part, but it was probable the rage Peter felt at her ingratitude, just two months after her elevation to the throne, that caused him to take such an exemplary revenge. De la Croix was beheaded, and the Czar leaped on the scaffold and buffeted the senseless head. Then he fetched Catherine in a carriage, and showed her the lifeless body of her lover. From that moment all relation ceased between husband and wife, and they only met in public.. And, after this long digression, let us return to our author's entrance into St. Petersburg, which could be hardly triumphal, for his trunks were kept for three days at Cronstadt, and he was obliged to go about in a leather hat, a white velvet waistcoat, gray trousers, and a magnificent carbuncle on his cheek. Still this poverty of clothing did not prevent him picking up useful information as pigeons do peas. Here, for instance, is a curious story about bear hunting, which turns up on the occasion of a visit to the Duc d'Ossuna :—

"A Siberian Cossack, fifty years of age, who had already killed thirty-nine bears, went out to kill the fortieth, accompanied by his son, a young man of twenty, and armed with his rifle instead of a knife. He had taken these precautions because the fortieth bear is generally supposed to be fatal to the sportsman, and avenge his nine-and-thirty brethren. The reason for this is very simple, the huntsman believing the myth

misses his bear, but the bear does not miss him. Well, then, the Cossack set out with his son, but instead of finding a bear, they came across a magnificent leopard. The young man, who had never before seen so formidable an animal, was terrified, and when the leopard attacked his father, instead of assisting him, he ran away. The Cossack, with the coolness of an old hunter, waited till the animal was twenty paces from him, and fired. The animal made a gigantic leap and fell dead.

"The Cossack turned to his son to see if, on the sound of firing, he would not come back; but the young man did not even turn his head: he continued to fly.

"Then the Cossack reloaded his gun, put his knife between his teeth, and went up to the animal. He took off the skin, and went home very thoughtful. His meditations were grave: he was asking himself what punishment the coward deserved who quitted his friend in the moment of danger. And he added:—

"'The son who abandons a father is more than a coward: he is a traitor.'

"When he reached home he had quite decided. He went to his son, who had shut himself up in his room, and ordered him to open the door.

"The young man obeyed, and fell at his father's feet.

"But the father, without giving any reason, ordered him to take a pick and follow him; he also took one himself.

"He led his son about a quarter of a verst from the house, and then traced on the ground a space six feet long

by three wide; then he began breaking up the ground, and making a sign to his son to do the same.

"The young man, who had no idea what he was doing, set to work. At the end of two hours they had dug a hole in which a man could lie down.

"'That is well,' said the father, rising; 'now say thy prayer.'

"The young man began to understand. Yet there was such decision in the accent with which the words were pronounced that he attempted no resistance."

"He fell on his knees and prayed.

"The father granted him time to say his prayer; then he measured the distance from which he had fired on the leopard, aimed at his son, and lodged a ball in his head, just at the spot where he had struck the animal.

"The young man fell stone dead. The father laid him in the grave, covered him with earth, then, dressing himself in his Sunday clothes, went and told the judge all that had occurred. He was sent to prison, and ordered to await the judgment of the governor-general. He obeyed with perfect calmness. The governor ordered the following sentence:—

"'For three days and nights the father will hold on his knees his son's head, separated from the body. If he dies, or goes mad, it will be the judgment of Heaven. If he survives it, he will have judged, not according to the wrath of man, but the conscience of a father.'

"The judgment was made known to the old Cossack, who performed the task with perfect tranquillity, and was immediately set at liberty. He reached the age of

eighty, killed his fortieth bear without any misadventure, and after that a great number of others. He died in 1851, without evincing the slightest remorse."

The great charm to us about Dumas's historical writings is, that everything he sees suggests an anecdote to him. Thus, the scaffolding round the citadel reminds him that in the reign of Catherine II., who had a horror of tallow candles, she found in her accounts a charge of fifteen hundred roubles for them. On a strict inquiry she discovered that the Grand Duke Paul having blistered his foot while out shooting, asked for a candle to rub it. It had cost about a penny, but figured for the above amount in the palace charges. As a pendant to this, we may add that in the same way the Emperor Nicholas found during one year four thousand five hundred roubles charged for cold cream. After a serious investigation the Czar learned that on one occasion the present emperor had ordered a box of the emollient, which cost three francs. Here is another famous anecdote, prompted by a visit to the Summer Garden, among the statues decorating which is a bust of Sobieski, the saviour of Vienna. One day, in 1855, the Emperor Nicholas, while crossing the Summer Garden, stopped before this bust. Turning to his aide-de-camp, he asked him, "Do you know who, next to Sobieski, was the greatest idiot in the world?" The aide-de-camp, probably suffering from an embarrassment of choice, kept silent, and the emperor spoke again: "Well, it was myself, for saving Austria the second time."

Talking of the universal demand for "backshish"

prevalent among the Russians, and known by the name of *natchaj*, or tea-money, our author cannot omit to mention the Russian tradition that when the Sclavon was first made he turned to his Creator and said, "Excellency, some drink-money, if you please." On the quay, too, the sight of Suvarov's statue affords room for the following remarkable *mot*:—

"When Suvarov returned to Petersburg, after his reverses in Switzerland, the capricious emperor merely sent Count Kutaissov to compliment him. Suvarov, already annoyed by his defeat, was still more so by this reception; however, he received the envoy graciously, merely affecting not to recognise him.

"And when Kutaissov appeared surprised at his want of memory,

"'Excuse, sir,' he said to him, 'a poor old man whose faculties are beginning to fail him. Count Kutaissov—Count Kutais——Let me see—no, I cannot remember the origin of your illustrious family—I presume you gained your title of count for some splendid victory?'

"'I never was a soldier,' the ex-barber replied.

"'Ah! I understand—you made your reputation as a diplomatist?'

"'Not so, prince.'

"'Well then, minister?'

"'No.'

"'What important post did you then hold?'

"'I had the honour to be valet to his majesty.'

"'Ah, that is very honourable, sir count.' Then,

ringing for his own servant, he said to him, on his entering the room: 'Troschka, my friend, you will do me the justice to say that I tell you every day not to drink or rob me?'

"'It is true, monseigneur.'

"'You would not listen to me; now look at this gentleman.'

"And he pointed to Kutaissov.

"'He was a valet like you; but he never got drunk or stole. Well, at the present day he is Huntsman General to his Majesty, Knight of all the orders of Russia, and Count of the Empire. Try and follow his example, my friend.'

"You must allow, my dear readers, that if Suvarov had not earned a statue by his victories he did so by this *mot*."

The mention of the Emperor Paul's name of course enables M. Dumas to describe his assassination in the minutest details, but he brings forward no new facts connected with it. He supplies some excellent anecdotes about General Kapioff, however, who was the only man who dared to play with the imperial tiger. Thus, on one occasion, he wagered he would pull Paul's pigtail: and it was certainly a desperate design thus to insult a man who made ladies leave their carriage when he passed, and sent an entire regiment to Siberia for going through its drill badly. Still Kapioff would not be defeated, and as the queue was at that time worn straight down the back, he put his own over one shoulder. The first time he was reprimanded by the emperor, the

second put under arrest, the third sent to the fortress. On his release Kapioff went back to his duty as page, and took his place just behind Paul's chair. In the middle of dinner, Kapioff seized his majesty's queue just as he would a bell-rope, and pulled it so violently that the Czar uttered a yell. "What is the matter?" asked Kapioff. "What are you doing with my queue, you rascal?" "It was on one side, sire; I was only putting it straight." "Well, you might have put it straight without pulling so hard." This story seems to us to bear too close an affinity with Turenne's slap on the shoulder. On the other hand, the emperor detested gloomy persons. Thus he exiled the famous Diebitsch, only sixteen years of age at the time, "because his face was so ugly that it caused his soldiers to feel melancholy."

M. Dumas certainly abuses the patience of his readers most intensely; through these three volumes we have scarcely a personal incident, or any new facts relative to St. Petersburg, whose inner life he could describe so well. It is then quite refreshing to come across a little bit worthy of quotation like the following:—

"And now for the karaoulnoy. This person is generally an old soldier. In Russia, the old soldiers, although drawn from the serfs—the recruiting is generally eight per thousand—after twenty-five years' service return as freemen to the place whence they came as slaves. In France, we should say poetically, "rentré dans ses foyers." But, alas! up to the present at least, there is no home in Russia for the old soldier. By serving his country, he has become a pariah. As a re-

ward for his services, the government discharges him, and the proprietor shuts the door in his face. There is, certainly, on the road to Tzarkoe-Zeloe, an invalid hospital, built after the manner of ours, and which could contain three thousand persons. But in this hotel of a new class there are one hundred and fifty officials and eighteen invalids. In Russia, as elsewhere, but in Russia more than elsewhere, philanthropic establishments are especially designed to supply a livelihood for a certain number of officials. Those for whom they are founded only come afterwards, or, perhaps, not at all. No matter! the establishment exists, that is all that is required. Russia is a huge façade; as for what there is behind it no one troubles himself. Any person who goes out of his way to look behind the façade resembles the cat, which, seeing itself for the first time in the glass, goes to the back of it, hoping to find another cat there.

"The old soldier, then, has but a choice of evils: if he has no medal, he turns robber, his only resource. If he has two or three medals, he becomes a beggar, kneels on the highway or in a church porch, kisses the ground when you pass, and lives on the four or five copecks thrown to him daily by charitable souls. If he has five, six, seven, or eight medals, he has a chance: that of becoming a karaoulnoy. We have about our house some eight of these gentry in the count's service, who watch the whole night through. I presume that they form relays, one part sleeping while the others watch; but one thing is certain, whenever we go out, day or night, we find a karaoulnoy in the ante-chamber, one at the door, another

in the yard. As soon as we appear, the poor fellows stand perfectly upright and give us the military salute."

There is a wholesome law in St. Petersburg that no one shall smoke in the public streets, owing to the danger of fire. One day the Emperor Nicholas met a Frenchman, who, ignorant of the law, was puffing away like a steam-engine. He invited him into his droschky, took him to the Winter Palace, and led him into the smoking-room of the grand-dukes. "Smoke here, sir," he said to him; "it is the only place in St. Petersburg where you are allowed to do so." Still, you are allowed to smoke on the Neva, for it would be difficult to set that on fire.

One of the curiosities of St. Petersburg which M. Dumas visited was the original wooden house built by Peter the Great; it is covered over with glass, and the dining-room has been converted into a chapel, where the sailors come to pray in large numbers; perhaps they confound Peter the Great with Saint Peter. Close by, too, is the boat, generally known as the grandmother of the Russian fleet. Another curiosity worthy of a visit is the fortress of St. Petersburg, about which M. Dumas industriously collected the following terrible story, which was told him by a friend, who heard it while shooting near Moscow in 1855. It was narrated by an old gentleman, who had left St. Petersburg at the early age of eighteen, and had never returned to the capital, much to the surprise of his neighbours. We will let him tell it in his own words, as any alteration on our part would only spoil the effect.

THE OLD SOLDIER'S STORY.

I was just eighteen years of age, and had been serving for two years, as ensign, in the Paulovsky regiment.

The regiment was stationed at the great building still standing on the side of the Champ de Mars, opposite the Summer Garden.

The Emperor Paul I. had reigned for three years, and lived in the Red Palace, which had just been completed.

One night, when I had been refused leave, owing to some boyish prank, and was alone in the guard-room, asleep, I was aroused by a voice, whose breath swept along my face, and whispered in my ear:—

"Dmitri Alexandrovitch, arise, and follow me."

I opened my eyes: a man was standing before me, who repeated the invitation as soon as I was awake.

"Follow you!" I repeated; "and where to?"

"I cannot tell you. Still, you may know that I come from the emperor."

I shuddered.

From the emperor! What could he want of me, a poor ensign, of good family, but too remote from the throne for my name ever to have reached the emperor's ears. I remembered the gloomy Russian proverb, which originated in the time of Ivan the Terrible, "Near the Czar, near death." Still I dared not hesitate. I leaped from the bed and dressed myself. Then I looked attentively at the man who had come to wake me. Although wrapped in his pelisse, I fancied I could recognise an old

Turkish slave, first the barber, then the favourite of the emperor. This examination, however, was not long; by prolonging it, it might have become dangerous.

"I am ready," I said, after five minutes, as I fastened on my sword.

My discomfiture was doubled when I saw my conductor, instead of going towards the barrack-gate, descend a small staircase leading into the cellarage. He lighted our road with a species of dark lantern. After several turnings I found myself opposite a door quite strange to me. During the entire walk we had not met a soul; the building seemed deserted. I fancied I saw two or three shadows flit past; but they disappeared in the obscurity. The door was closed; my guide rapped upon it in a peculiar way; it flew open, evidently by the assistance of some one on the other side. In truth, when we had passed, I distinctly saw a man close the door and follow us. After proceeding five hundred paces we reached an open grating, which my guide unlocked and closed after us. I now remembered the tradition that a subterranean gallery connected the Red Palace with the Grenadiers' barracks. I saw we were following this gallery, and must be going to the palace. We arrived at a door like the one we had gone through first. My guide knocked; it opened, and we found ourselves opposite a staircase, which we ascended. It led into the offices of some large building, which was carefully heated.

Then all my doubts ceased; I was being taken to the emperor—to the emperor who had sent to fetch me, an insignificant subaltern. I remembered the story of the

young ensign whom he met in the street, and raised in less than a quarter of an hour to the rank of general. But I could not hope he summoned me for the same purpose. Whatever it might be, we soon reached a last door, before which a sentry was walking up and down. My guide put his hand on my shoulder, saying,—

"Take care of yourself; you will soon be in the presence of the emperor."

He whispered to the sentry, who moved on one side. Then he opened the door by some secret spring, as it seemed to me. A little man, dressed in the Prussian fashion, with boots coming half-way up his thigh, a coat falling to his spurs, and wearing a gigantic cocked-hat, turned round at the noise. I recognised the emperor: it was not difficult to do so, for he reviewed us every day. I remembered that, on the previous day, his eye had rested on me; he had called my captain from the ranks, and asked him some questions; then gave an officer of his suite some sharp and decided order. All this only served to increase my apprehensions.

"Sire," my conductor said, with a bow, "this is the young ensign with whom you desired to speak."

The emperor drew near me, and as he was very short he stood on tiptoe to look at me. Doubtless he recognised me as the person he wanted, for he nodded his head, and, turning on his heel, said, "Go!"

My guide bowed, went out, and left me alone with the emperor. I assure you I would sooner have remained alone with a lion in its den. The emperor at first appeared to pay no attention to me; he walked up and

down with long strides, stopping before an open window to take a breath of fresh air; then returning to the table, he took a pinch of snuff. I had ample time to examine all the furniture and arrangements of the room, which was the one in which Paul was afterwards killed. Near one of the windows was a bureau; on it lay an open paper.

At length the emperor appeared to remember my presence, and came up to me. His face seemed to me furious as he stopped in front of me.

"Dust," he addressed me, "'dust!—thou knowest thou art only dust, and that I am everything!"

I know not how I found strength to reply,—

"You are the chosen of the Lord, the decider of the destiny of men."

"Hum!" he growled. And turning his back on me he began walking up and down again, taking snuff furiously, till he resumed:—

"Thou knowest that, when I command, I must be obeyed without resistance, observation, or comment."

"As one would obey God. Yes, sire, I know it."

He looked at me fixedly. There was an expression in his eyes of so strange a character that I could not endure his look; I turned away. He seemed satisfied with the influence he exercised over me; he attributed my conduct to respect, while it was disgust. Then he went to the bureau, took the paper, read it once more, folded it, placed it in an envelope and sealed it, not with the imperial cypher, but with a ring he wore on his finger. Then he came back to me.

"Remember that I have chosen thee among a thousand to execute my orders," he said, "because I thought they would be well executed by thee."

"I shall ever have before my eyes the obedience I owe my emperor," I replied.

"Good, good! remember that thou art but dust, and I am everything."

"I await your majesty's orders."

"Take this letter, carry it to the governor of the fortress, accompany him wherever he may be pleased to take thee, be present at what he does, and come and tell me 'I have seen.'"

I took the packet with a bow.

"'I have seen'—thou understandest?—'I have seen.'"

"Yes, sire."

"Go!"

And he opened himself the door by which I had entered: my conductor was awaiting me. The emperor closed the door after me, repeating, "Dust, dust, dust!"

I stood all amazement on the threshold.

"Come!" my conductor said to me.

We left the palace by a different route. A sledge was awaiting us in the court-yard; the gate of the palace looking on the Fontanka-bridge was opened, and the sledge started at a hand gallop. We crossed the *place*, and reached the banks of the Neva. Our horses rushed upon the ice, and, guided by the belfry of Peter and Paul, we traversed the river. The night was gloomy, the wind howled in a mournful and terrible manner. I had scarcely noticed we had reached dry

ground ere we arrived at the gates of the fortress; a soldier asked the password, and let us in. The sledge stopped at the governor's door. The word given once again, we entered his house as we had done the fortress.

"By the emperor's order!" This command soon aroused the governor, who came to us trying to hide his alarm beneath a smile. With a man like Paul there was no more security for the gaolers than for the captives, for the hangmen than for the victims. My guide made the governor a sign that he had to do with me, then he regarded me with more attention; still he hesitated before addressing me—my youth doubtlessly surprised him. To put him at his ease, I gave him without a word the emperor's order. He took it to a light, examined the seal, and on recognising it as the signal of a secret order, he bowed, made an almost imperceptible sign of the cross, and opened it. He read the order, then turning to me, said,—

"You are to see?"

"I am to see."

"What are you to see?"

"You know."

"But do you know?"

"No."

He remained for a moment in thought.

"You came in a sledge?" he asked me.

"Yes."

"How many persons will it hold?"

"Three."

"Does this gentleman go with us?" he asked, pointing to my conductor.

I hesitated, not knowing what to say.

"No," the latter replied, "I will wait."

"Very good: get ready a second sledge, choose four soldiers, let one take a lever, another a hammer, and the last two hatchets."

The man to whom the governor spoke went out directly. Then turning to me, he added—

"Come, and you shall see."

We left the room with a turnkey behind us, and walked on till we found ourselves opposite the prison. The governor pointed to a door. The gaoler opened it, went in, and lighted a lantern. We followed: we went down ten steps, passed a row of dungeons, then down ten more, but did not stop. At last we descended five more, and at length stopped. The doors were numbered: the governor stopped at the one marked No. 11. He gave a silent signal: it seemed in this abode of the dead as if he had lost the power of speech. There was at this time a frost of at least twenty degrees outside. At the depth where we found ourselves, it was mingled with a damp which penetrated to the bone; my marrow was frozen, and yet I wiped the perspiration from my brow. The door opened: we went down six steep and slippery steps, and found ourselves in a dungeon of six square feet. I fancied, by the light of the lantern, that I saw a human form moving in it. The governor remained on the last step, and said to the prisoner—

"Rise, and dress yourself."

I had a curiosity to know to whom this order was addressed.

"Turn on the light," I said to the gaoler.

I then saw a thin and pallid old man rise up. He had evidently been immured in this dungeon in the same clothes he had on when arrested, but they had fallen off him piecemeal, and he was only dressed in a ragged pelisse. Through the rags his naked, bony, shivering person could be seen. Perhaps this body had been covered by splendid garments; perhaps the ribbons of the most noble orders had once crossed his panting chest. At present he was only a living skeleton, that had lost rank, dignity, even name, and which was called No. 11. He rose, and wrapped himself in the fragments of his pelisse without uttering a complaint; his body was bowed down, conquered by prison-damp, time, it might be hunger. His eye was haughty, almost menacing.

"It is good," said the governor; "come."

He was the first to go out.

The prisoner threw a parting glance on his cell, his stone bench, his water-jug, and rotting straw. He uttered a sigh, yet it was impossible that he could regret anything of this. He followed the governor, and passed before me. I never shall forget the glance he turned upon me in passing, and the reproach that was concentrated in it.

"So young," it seemed to say, "and already obeying tyranny!"

I turned away: that glance had pierced my heart like a dagger. He passed the door of the dungeon.

How long was it since he entered it? Perhaps he did not know himself. He must have ceased for a long time measuring days and nights. On reaching the governor's door, we found two sledges waiting. The prisoner was ordered into the one that had brought us, and we followed him, the governor by his side, I in front. The other sledge was occupied by the four soldiers.

Where were we going? I knew not. What were we going to do? I was equally ignorant. I had only to *see*, the action itself did not concern me.

We started.

Through my position the old man's knees were between mine: I felt them tremble. The governor was wrapped in his furs; I was buttoned up in my military frock, and yet the cold reached us. The prisoner was almost naked, but the governor had offered him no coverings. For a moment I thought of taking off my coat and offering it to him: the governor guessed my intention.

"It is not worth while," he said.

Soon we reached the Nevâ again, and our sledge took the direction of Cronstadt. The wind came off the Baltic, and blew furiously; the sleet cut our faces; though our eyes had grown accustomed to the darkness, we could not see ten yards before us.

At last we stopped in the midst of a furious storm. We must have been about a league and a half from St. Petersburg. The governor got off the sledge, and went

up to the other. The soldiers had already got off, each holding the tool he had been ordered to bring.

"Cut a hole in the ice," the governor said to them.

I could not restrain a cry of terror. I began to comprehend.

"Ah!" the old man muttered, with an accent resembling the laugh of a skeleton, "then the empress does remember me. I fancied she had forgotten me."

Of what empress was he talking? Three had passed away in succession,—Anne, Elizabeth, and Catherine. It was evident he believed he was still living under one of them, and did not know even the name of the man who ordered his death.

What was the obscurity of the night compared with that of his tomb!

The four soldiers had set to work. They broke the ice with their hammers, cut it with their axes, and raised the blocks with the lever. All at once they started back: the ice was broken; the water was rising.

"Come down!" the governor said to the old man. The order was useless, for he had already done so. Kneeling on the ice, he was praying fervently.

The governor gave an order in a low tone to the soldiers; then he came back to my side, for I had not left the sledge. In a minute the prisoner rose.

"I am ready," he said.

The four soldiers rushed upon him.

I turned my eyes away; but though I did not see, I heard.

I heard the noise of a body hurled into the abyss.

In spite of myself I turned round. The old man had disappeared. I forgot that I had no right to give orders, but shouted to the driver, "Away, away!"

"Stop!" cried the governor. The sledge, which had already moved, stopped again.

"All is not finished," the governor said to me in French.

"What have we yet to do?" I asked.

"Wait!" he replied.

We waited half an hour.

"The ice has set, your excellency," one of the soldiers said.

"Art thou sure?"

He struck the spot where the hole had so lately yawned: the water had become solid again.

"We can go," said the governor.

The horses started at a gallop, and in less than ten minutes we had reached the fortress. There I rejoined my conductor.

"To the Red Palace!" he said to the driver.

Five minutes after the emperor's door opened again to let me pass.

He was up and fully dressed, just as I had seen him the first time.

He stopped before me.

"Well?" he asked.

"I have seen," I replied.

"Thou hast seen, seen, seen?"

"Look at me, sire," I said to him, "and you will not doubt."

I was standing before a mirror. I looked at myself, but I was so pale, my features were so altered, that I scarce recognised myself. The emperor looked at me, and went to take a second paper from the bureau where the first had lain.

"I give thee," he said, "an estate with five hundred peasants between Troitza and Peresloff. Start this night, and never come back to St. Petersburg. If thou speakest, thou knowest how I punish. Go."

I went. I never returned to St. Petersburg, and this is the first time I have told the story to a living soul.

Such is one of the legends of the fortress.

Faugh! the very ink seems to turn to blood as we describe these horrible details. We have no heart to write more, but will leave M. Dumas at this first stage of his journey, hoping that, when next we meet him, we may find more of himself and less of the atrocities committed by such ruffians as he represents Peter and Paul to have been. The history of Russia wants a little sunshine thrown on it; and it is cruel of M. Dumas to give us only the gloomiest details he can collect about a country which sadly wants an honest friend to show the few good qualities it possesses.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE DESERT.

It is an old saying that travellers see strange things, and, of a surety, the French are the travellers who see the strangest. We have come across an adventurer, who has spent so extraordinary a life that we almost fear to make extracts from it. Still we will proceed to analyse the life-history of Hadji Ben-el-Hamed Bey, and reveal the desert mysteries he describes, always without guaranteeing their truth. That we will leave to M. Stanislas de la Peyrouse, who has volunteered a preface.*

The hadji's real name is Louis du Couret, and he is the son of a colonel of the Empire, killed in Spain in 1813. From his earliest youth he entertained a desire, like Lord Lovel, foreign countries for to see, and, at the age of twenty-four, he tore himself from his newly-married wife and proceeded to the East. It does not seem as if he were in any hurry to get back to connubial bliss, for he has been travelling nearly ever since. He fought at Nezib, under the banners of Ibrahim Pasha; but when peace was restored, he proceeded into Central Africa, where, according to his biographer, he proved one

* Les Mystères du Désert: Souvenirs de Voyages en Asie et en Afrique, &c. Two Vols. Paris: E. Dentu.

of the most surprising facts of anatomic physiology, the existence of the Niam-Niams, or gentry with tails. Some people are so daring as still to deny their existence, in spite of the hadji's assertion. It is a pity that the colonel did not shame the doubters by bringing home a live specimen; but we presume the difficulty arose from the fact of the Niams being anthropophagists, and would, therefore, have run a risk of starvation. But the great desire M. du Couret felt was to visit Mecca, and he therefore became a Mussulman, going through the ceremonial with unshrinking fortitude. We have had a traveller who incurred the same risks without altering his religion, but M. de la Peyrouse makes it a point in his hero's favour that he should so nobly have overcome prejudices. Still, we must do him the credit to state that he has remained true to his new faith, though what views *madame son épouse* entertained on the delicate subject of polygamy are not made known to us. After a lengthened stay at Mecca, the hadji traversed the Hedjaz-Yemen-Hadramout and the country of the Wahabites. He was, among other accidents, shipwrecked, and exposed for sale in the market-place of Derrezêh by his captors. He was saved from this humiliation by the governor of the province, and set off for Bagdad, proceeding thence to the states of the Imaum of Mascat, whose confidential minister he speedily became. After serving for some time as Arabic interpreter to a French mission, the hadji set out for Persia, where he made rather a mess of it. Accused of a crime of which he was innocent, he suffered the bastinado, and was obliged to fly for his

life. He succeeded in reaching Mascat once more, and finally returned to France, after twenty years' absence. He applied to the government of 1848 for means to carry out a mission in Central Africa, but was foiled, and has since supported a numerous family by his literary labours. His first production was "Le Pélerinage à la Mecque," edited by Alexandre Dumas; next, "Arabia Felix," which appeared in the feuilleton of the *Siècle;* and lastly, "Les Mystères du Désert," which we have now under consideration. Going on at the present rate of progress, the hadji will require twenty years to describe all his doings in the East, and we heartily wish them to him. He should, however, publish more rapidly, for his books lose much of their interest, owing to the lengthened period since the events occurred. Still we can find much that is novel and worthy of extract.

In order to pursue his researches in Arabia, the hadji joined a caravan bound for Mareb. The only European who had ever entered this country before him was a Frenchman, Arnaud, known as the Hekim Yussuf. The journey was a terrible one, for the caravan had to pass through the celebrated seas of sand before reaching Mokallah, on the Indian ocean. But, in addition to the usual difficulties of a desert journey, this portion of Arabia was more especially infested by wild beasts, and the lions are such a scourge, that various novel schemes of killing them have been invented. Here are some specimens:—

"The Mareby have invented an infallible method for waging war on the lions. They train panthers to hunt

it, just as our dogs are taught to follow the track of the boar or wolf. To obtain this end the panthers are caught while still young, and when perfectly broken in, the hunter binds their eyes and hangs them over his dromedary by a rope. When the lion's hiding-place has been detected, the boldest of the tribe walks towards the animal. On his approach, if the lion be at home, it is sure to come out, for it is ever ready for a fight. Then the panthers are uncoupled, and attack the foe, one in front, the other in the rear. Then a deadly combat ensues, and the panther that faces the lion is almost certain to lose its life. But the other one leaps on the lion's back, and breaks in the vertebræ of the neck. At times, the lioness will come to the rescue, and then hunters and panthers have their work cut out."

Another favourite mode of killing the lion is to watch till it has indulged in a gorge of beef, when it lies digesting like a boa-constrictor, and cannot offer the slightest resistance. Another way is to dig a trench, surrounded by a strong breastwork of wood, in which the hunter lies by the side of an ox. The lion, attracted by the scent of fresh meat, comes within range, and the hunter takes a deliberate aim. The only unpleasantness is, that if he does not kill the animal at the first shot it is all over with him; no matter how strong the breastwork may be, the lion is sure to tear it down and take its revenge. In addition to wild beasts, the desert is infested with all sorts of noxious serpents, which cause grievous losses to a caravan. On the journey to which we refer, the reis, by mistake, stopped at a place known as the "refuge of

vipers," and the consequence was that several persons and camels were stung to death. The reis, in philosophising on the matter afterwards, ascribed it to the fact that, on setting out, a santon had cast a spell on the caravan. The superstitious Arabs have various omens to predict the result of an expedition. Thus, if, on setting out, they meet a black man in a poor condition, that is a bad sign. On the other hand black crows are a famous augury,* but one by itself is unlucky. An ugly old woman is sure to disappoint your expectations, but you may start in all confidence if you have met a young and pretty woman, to whom you said, "I'll fasten thy girdle, fair one; lift thy djebba and display to us thy charms, for that will bring us good fortune." The woman will rarely refuse if a present be promised her on the return of the caravan.

Not long after, the caravan passed the Devil's Castle, which bore a terrible reputation. No one who ever visited it had ever returned alive, for he was devoured by a treasure-watching dragon. This was quite enough to make our author attempt the enterprise, and he set out alone, after the reis had taken a heart-broken farewell from him. He found no difficulty in scaling the heights and inspecting the ruins, but, on his return, he was stopped by a band of armed men, who took him prisoner, and at first seemed disposed to put him out of the way; but his coolness saved his life, and he was allowed to rejoin the caravan. Unfortunately for the

* The Romans held a different faith: "Sæpè sinistra cavâ prædixit ab ilice cornix."

hadji, this daring enterprise made the Arabs believe that he was specially protected by Sheitan, and, by a natural sequence, they attributed to him all the evils that had hitherto befallen the caravan. When, too, they were exposed to the fury of the simoom, there was no keeping the Arabs at bay; they must have the infidel dog's blood, as a grateful sacrifice to Allah. A fanatic had raised his sword to fell him to the earth, when a fearful flash of lightning, followed by a long, lasting peal of thunder, took place; the Arabs fell back in terror, and our author escaped. Ere long, they arrived at Mareb, where the hadji had to undergo trials to which all that had hitherto befallen him seemed child's play. He was summoned to the palace to explain to the nagib the motive of his visit to the country, and was exposed to various experiments, in order to test his veracity. In the first place, he was taken to the roof of a lofty tower, and bidden to leap off. This was unpleasant, to say the least of it, but as death would have been the penalty of refusal, he did not hesitate for a moment. He took a running leap; but at the moment of losing his foothold he was seized by four vigorous arms, and pulled back. At the next trial he was ordered to enter the vaults beneath the tower, and do deadly combat with a panther confined in a cage, of which the key was given him. He proceeded along a most perilous route, losing his way half a score times, but at length found the cage. Just as he was opening the door, a heavy iron portcullis dropped in front of it, and trial number two was over. But the last was the worst. Our author was carried back to the hall

of audience, and bidden to kneel down while the nagib cut his head off. This was really past a joke, and his head began to quiver on his shoulders; but, fortunately, there was an interlude. The fanatic, whom we have already mentioned, rushed into the hall, demanding vengeance on the kafir dog, and his request was most politely complied with. The hadji was held down, and the fanatic seized the sabre with delight, but was rather staggered when told that unless he cut off the victim's head at one stroke, his own would be the penalty. However, he was consoled by being allowed to use his own pistols, and, after examining them carefully, to see whether they were loaded, he fired them both point-blank at our author. The only result was that his burnous caught fire, but was speedily removed by the attendant negroes. Having thus satisfactorily proved that Allah held special guard over him, the hadji was left at liberty to go where he listed. Thenceforth he was free of the country, and took advantage of the opportunity to inspect the ruins of "Saba the White," on whose site the modern town of Mareb has been built; there was, however, little to satisfy the antiquary, and the great queen Bilkis, who obtained honourable mention in the Koran for her magnificence, has assumed the proportions of a myth. Proceeding thence to the camping-ground of the caravan, our author found a fair being held, and had an opportunity to see the celebrated performance of the serpent charmers:—

"The man seized one of his four serpents by the nape of the neck, and separated the reptile's jaws by means

of a rod, thus showing us the fangs, from which issued a white and oily substance. After this he offered his arm to the viper. It struck him at once, while the dancer multiplied his hideous contortions, invoking Sedua-Aissev. The reptile continued to strike, until the enchanter, tearing it from his arm, showed us the blood pouring from the wound. Convinced that I had to deal with a clever conjuror, I asked for the viper to be handed to me. This the enchanter refused; but, catching a wretched little cat, he threw it down before the snake, which struck it, and the poor animal died in a few seconds. It is needless to add that I was completely cured of any desire to play with the snake."

The Nagib of Mareb raises his chief revenue by man-hunting, and our author enters into some curious details as to the respective value of the captives. A bearded negro is worth two hundred to three hundred francs; an adolescent, four hundred to four hundred and fifty francs; a boy, two hundred francs; an Abyssinian, one thousand five hundred to two thousand five hundred francs; a negress from eighteen to twenty-five, is worth two hundred francs; one from thirteen to eighteen, three hundred francs; from eleven to thirteen, five hundred francs; a nursing mother, one hundred francs; and so on. When put up to auction, the purchaser has a right to return them within three days, if he find the following defects: those who have their eyes in a bad state; those who have sharp teeth, which indicates anthropophagy; a woman who snores, or has hair of two colours; and any one of either sex afflicted with the

ark-el-ensil. This is a species of parasitic worm, which forms a tumour, and has to be extracted by winding it carefully on a stick. If it break during the operation, the negro is sure to die before long, or remains useless. Our author speaks decidedly in favour of the slave trade, and asserts that the victims are protected from ill-treatment by the laws, and are regarded as children. In Senegal, while the slave trade existed, the kings fattened up their prisoners and took care of them. Now that they cannot sell them, they suffer them to starve. In Bournou they are rather better treated, but there they are only hunted through motives of piety, in order to convert them to Muhammadanism. Those who refuse to undergo circumcision are sold as slaves.

The nagib had certain notions of justice, and was accessible to the whole population. Our author had an opportunity of seeing him give a couple of decisions in particularly awkward cases, and they deserve honourable mention here:—

"The first case came off between a kiatib (writer) and a fellah. The fellah had carried off the kiatib's wife, and declared she was his, while the woman recognised them both. The nagib heard both parties, and ordered the woman to be left with him for half an hour. The next case was between a fekaï (fruiterer) and a zibdaï (a butterman). The latter was covered with butter, while the other was intact. The fruiterer said, 'I went to buy butter of this man, and to pay for it. I pulled out my purse full of coin: the money tempted him, and he shouted 'Thieves!' and seized my hand; whereupon we

came straight to thee.' To this the butterman replied: 'This man came to my shop to buy butter. When I had filled his *gouba*, he said, 'Hast thou change for a dollar?' I put my hand in my pocket and pulled out a handful of change, which I laid on the counter. He seized it, and was going off with my money and my butter, when I stopped him, and came with him here.' Both swore by Muhammad to the truth of their story, and the nagib also ordered them to return in half an hour. At the expiration of that time he returned to the hall and delivered judgment. He told the kiatib the woman was his, and gave the other party fifty blows of the kourbash. Then he gave the fruiterer his money, and applied the same dose of stick to the butterman. Our author was curious to know how he arrived at these decisions, and it was simple enough. He had taken the woman into his room, and bidden her to fill his inkstand, which she did without spilling a drop: hence she was used to it, and must belong to the kiatib. As for the money question, that was rather more complicated; but it was placed in a bowl of water, and there was not the slightest trace of grease. Now, had it belonged to the butterman, it would have been necessarily greasy, as he was all covered with butter; so this plainly proved him a scamp."

During the stay of the caravan at Mareb, a panther came down from the mountains and carried off a young girl bathing in the stream. A pursuit was at once instituted, and the animal killed in its den single-handed by a young shepherd. The girl was found to be but slightly

injured by the panther's claws, and was brought back triumphantly. She was a relative of the nagib, and he promised her in marriage to her rescuer, whom he elevated to noble rank. During the confusion a band of robbers invaded the deserted encampment, but being detected in time, were made prisoners to the number of forty. The next morning they were all decapitated, and a philanthropist, probably a member of the society for the abolition of capital punishment, who interceded for them, shared the same fate. "He must be an accomplice," the nagib sagely remarked; and off went his head.

After taking leave of the hospitable nagib, our author pursued his journey with the caravan, and the real difficulties now commenced; for they were entering the country of the independent Arabs, who levied black mail, and had to keep their eyes open against robbers. In spite of all their precautions, they lost a loaded dromedary on the second night of camping. Two Bedouins had come up to the caravan, and, after being kindly treated, retired. Immediately after the loss of the camel was detected, and the tchaousses set off in pursuit. They soon returned, stating that they had seen three men mounted on camels, out of reach of capture. The way the trick is effected is ingenious: the thieves usually come up to the caravan at nightfall, and while two keep the officials in conversation, a third glides in under cover of the night, wrapped in a dark burnous. So soon as he has selected the object of his desires, he throws a cloth over it, leads it gently away, and is off like a shot.

Another curious thing was, that the caravan suddenly came up with a band of gipsies camped out in the desert, and apparently perfectly at home. It is a matter of wonder to us how they can live there, seeing that they have no opportunity of pilfering linen from hedgerows, or levying tribute on a poultry-yard. But this rencontre was soon forgotten in the more exciting chase of a lion. Fires were lighted to keep the animal at bay, but it was of no avail: the lion was hungry, and would not be baulked. Still, on seeing the number of opponents ranged in battle order, the lion retired savagely, when our author fired upon it and wounded it. In a second it turned back, and bounded, with a hoarse roar, into the midst of the encampment, picking out the author of its wound instinctively as the first victim of its fury.

"While I was preparing for a terrible combat, one of my Arab companions, already accustomed to meet this danger, hastened up at full speed on his camel to the side of the lion. By a simultaneous movement, the camel reared, and the lion, rising on its hind legs, dug its claws into the poor brute's chest. The two animals fell together, but the Arab had already given his enemy a violent sword stroke on the head, and leaped to the ground. Another stroke cut the sinews of its hind legs, and the lion rolled in the dust, uttering frightful yells of pain. In a second a lance was thrust through its chest by another Arab, and it lay dead by the side of the expiring camel. Not a man had been wounded."

The skin was presented to our author, who had quite recovered the good graces of the Arabs by his skilful

treatment of the viper stings; and it was no small gift, for it is supposed to guard the owner from all danger. The next day the caravan crossed another, which was in very bad care, for it had no guards with it. On inquiry, they learned that they had been killed by the Arabs. A merchant, who formed part of the caravan, had a large quantity of haschisch with him, which he distributed to the guards, in spite of the strict rule that they should not use it. One day, when they had taken a stronger dose than usual, the caravan was surrounded by a strong body of nomades, who demanded tribute. The guards, maddened by the drug, attacked the Arabs, and killed two or three. But it was a dangerous experiment; the Bedouins fell on the caravan, and killed two-thirds of the travellers. They were determined to destroy all the rest unless the reis delivered up the culprits. This he did by indicating the merchant who sold the fatal drug, and the three survivors among its consumers. The latter were beheaded and their property confiscated, while the merchant was specially tortured. His ears and nose were cut off, his eyes gouged out, and, after this, his head chopped off. In addition, the caravan was compelled to purchase its release by giving up a third of its property. A few days later, our author arrived at Kond, and proceeded to pay his respects to the nagib, who resides in a splendid fortified citadel, and treated his guest with true Arab hospitality. The country is in a highly flourishing condition, and contains about twenty thousand souls, all actively engaged in industrial occupations. It is

watered by the Wadi-Kond, a torrent which has given its name to the entire oasis.

After quitting Kond, the caravan reached the "seas of sand," which our author decides were produced by volcanic agency, like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Before long they were assailed by a terrible simoom, which indeed spared their lives at the expense of nine camels, but proved the destruction of a caravan proceeding in the opposite direction. All around lay the bodies of men and animals covered with sand, and the hadji was enabled to restore but one man and one woman to life. All the rest had perished. But their own caravan was in a very dangerous position: the scorching breath of the simoom had tainted all the water in their skins, while the wells they passed were infected by the corrupting bodies of thousands of locusts. The track of the caravan was marked by the victims of dysentery, but ere long matters came to a crisis:—

"Not a tree or plant was visible, only that long dry and harsh grass which served as food to the ostriches. A perfectly transparent sky, a leaden sun, which poured its beams on our head, a yellowish white ground ordinarily of a concave form, like a burning-glass, and a gentle breeze burning like a flame—such is a faithful picture of the country we were compelled to traverse. In this immensity our camels looked like a swarm of migrating ants. We were exhausted—burnt up by the imperceptible sand raised by so many simultaneous footsteps, and which, filtering through our clothes, laid another skin upon ours. It had changed the colour of

our slaves even: they were as yellow as Malays. In addition, thirst devoured us, and we dared not touch the few cups of water the simoom had spared us, and which were kept for the next halt. Still we were compelled to slaughter a few of our worst camels, and find that precious liquid for which, under similar circumstances, an Arab merchant paid his entire fortune. But, alas! we must have killed them all to satisfy so many craving mouths. The poor brutes were utterly exhausted, for they had received no water for eight days, and they began falling down in every direction."

When matters reached the worst, and not one of the travellers expected to survive, another caravan made its appearance, coming in the opposite direction. Several skins of water were hurriedly thrown on the sufferers, and they were restored to life as if by magic. They pushed on, and came up with a tribe of Arabs, from whom they purchased goats' milk and some fresh meat. The next day the caravan crossed the frontier of Hadramout, and, to their delight, perceived the oasis of Doân in the distance.

Doân, or Raschid, is one of the largest cities in Hadramout, and our author identifies it with the Dan, mentioned in Ezekiel. It is a most flourishing place, and a large contingent of the population is represented by Jews. The word Hadramout signifies "promptitude of death," and is quite justified by the number of murders annually committed. For a Spanish crown you can always hire a bravo to put your enemy out of the way. The principal production of the country is coffee,

and there are two or three crops annually. The best sort grows in the district called Yemen, and is the real Mocha. At this place our author quitted the caravan, to find his way alone across the country to the seaport of Mokallah, where he intended to take ship for Mascat, and the nagib behaved most nobly to him, presenting him with a purse of five hundred thalaris to find him in coffee along the road.

We regret that we have not space to describe the wonderful adventures that occurred to him as he traversed the desolate country, with only two servants and a guard of honour. We can only briefly allude to some. On one occasion he went to shoot gazelles, and managed to get into a quicksand, in which he was almost drowned ere his servants came to the rescue.* On another he killed a heap of young lions, and a knavish Arab sold him some of the flesh for beefsteaks, which he devoured with considerable appetite. But he bore a charmed life. Bedouins might plunder and strip him, but he always emerged triumphantly; and hence it is not surprising that he reached the seaport in safety. There is also another surprising interlude of a discharged servant, who was bribed by the Mollahs of Mecca to poison him, and continually turned up in the most improbable places. Even the ship that bore him to Mascat underwent adventures sufficient for a three-volume novel; but it bore Cæsar and his fortunes, and of course made the port at last.

* It is a very curious fact that this incident is described exactly as Captain Mayne Reid describes a similar occurrence in one of his travels.

CHAPTER XVII.

A ROMANCE OF THE LANDES.

M. EDMOND ABOUT has chosen, for the subject of a new novel, a part of France from which the book-writing swarm of travellers has hitherto kept aloof, through sheer despair of being able to evoke any interest from such dull, monotonous *landes* as those which commence in the vicinity of Bordeaux. M. About, however, has succeeded in producing a most amusing and really interesting novel out of apparently the most simple incidents. The story, in short, relates to a mere peasant boy and girl, and reads for all the world like one of those charming Black Forest idyls with which Auerbach occasionally and ever opportunely favours us.

It was quite by accident that our author made the acquaintance of Maître Pierre, the hero of his romance. Business calling him to Grenoble, he proceeded *viâ* Bordeaux, instead of selecting the shorter route by Lyons. A delay of a week, occasioned by a miscalculation, enabled him to meet Maître Pierre, who was to serve as his guide, philosopher, and friend through the *landes* of the Gironde. Still, we think he treated Bordeaux rather scurvily in wishing to run away from it so soon, if it be like the description he gives of it:—

"Bordeaux is five miles long, and has 150,000 inhabitants; plenty of room, then, for few people. But the entire population does not breathe at its ease. If the grass be growing in the streets and squares of the new town, there is some stifling felt in the old districts. The Jews, chapmen, brokers, and marine-store men live in a dirty and unhealthy hive; and their shops form no straight line along the narrow and unpaved streets. You may still see a quantity of those paunchy, hunch-backed, and decrepit houses which form the delight of romantic archæology, and you need only go to Bordeaux to form an accurate idea of old Paris. In the new town, all is vast, rectilinear, and monumental; the streets, squares, avenues, esplanades, and buildings rival the splendour of what we are taught to admire in Paris. The Grand Théâtre, containing only twelve hundred persons, has the imposing aspect of a Colosseum, and a staircase which might be transferred with advantage to our Opera. The *cafés* are truly monuments, and I saw a bathing establishment which bore strong resemblance to a necropolis. All this grandeur dates from Louis XV. and Louis XVI."

But since these buildings were erected, Bordeaux has been in a state of quasi-stagnation. She has allowed rival cities to outstrip her in the race for commerce, and Havre has quite taken her place. Still, with all such drawbacks, it is a very pleasant city, and the Bordelais excel in the fabrication of wines. The wine-factors do not announce their trade like those simple manufacturers of Cette, who write on their signboard, "Manufactory

of Madeira and Swiss Absinthe;" still it is asserted that the heavy wines of the Charente come to Bordeaux to receive a baptism which quadruples their value. They are resold with another brand to the owner who supplied them, and thus Bordeaux gains by its travels. But it is not solely as a commercial city that we should regard Bordeaux; it is also a city for amusement. The managers of the theatre are ruined at Rouen, and make a fortune at Bordeaux. It is a question of climate, above all of race. The population of Bordeaux is one of the prettiest specimens of the French nation. The women possess more expression than freshness, but with good eyes, good hair, and white teeth, a woman cannot but look well. The men have a sharp look, a lively mind, and brilliancy of language. They like to dress themselves, show themselves, and then indulge a little. They pay but slight attention to literature, excepting the dramatic branch, and the arts are matters of indifference when you have excepted music. Comedy attracts them less than the opera, the opera less than the ballet. The pleasures they prefer are not the most elevated but the most lively. All this M. About was enabled to discover in a single day, for, as he says, you have soon seen everything in a country where you know no one. He was on the point of packing up, to seek fresh fields and pastures new, when he stumbled against a friend, who suggested the Landes as a pleasant place to spend a week in. The reason was expressed in the following words:—

"You do not know that you are in the most curious

of French departments. We possess, to the north of the Gironde, ground of marvellous fertility, where millions are picked up in baskets. To the south, it is a sandy desert, where the men walk on stilts, where the phenomena of the mirage may be seen as on the Sahara; where men go out fishing for ducks, and where the bull and the wild horse were recently hunted. You may see there moving mountains, villages buried beneath the sand, marshes that produce the plague, and ponds where the tempest is more terrible than on the open sea. Is not all that worth putting oneself out of the way for? Besides, the *lande* commences at the gates of Bordeaux, and you can traverse it in three or four days. Lastly, you must know there is no other country so much in the fashion just now. This poor land, abandoned for a long time as an incurable patient, has found physicians. There is not a soul in the department who does not occupy himself with the *landes*. Everybody writes a pamphlet about them; engineers, merchants, proprietors, and, of course, the journalists, nib their best pen to give their opinion. It is a consultation in which everybody talks at once, and still they will soon come to an understanding. The great capitalists are attracted by the rumour; the most uncultivated land is rising in value; there is no longer a want of purchasers, but of sellers. You will be asked about the Landes in Paris, be assured, and just think how you will be regarded, were you reduced to confess your ignorance or indifference."

These solid reasons induced M. About to devote a

week to the Landes, and all he wanted was a companion. But his friend reassured him; he would be scarcely fifteen miles from Bordeaux ere he would be joined by Maître Pierre, the wonder of the Landes. He could do everything, and knew everything, save reading and writing. Till he attained the age of twenty, the *lande* was the object of his adoration, and draining a horror to him, but since then a change had taken place in his views. He had now become an enthusiast; he rushed about on his stilts, knocking at every door, advising the laborious, scolding the idlers, lending his arms to one, his experience to others, and, above all, watching the arrival of visitors, whom he could take by the collar and convert to his system. In short, so excellent was his plan, and so certain of eventual success, that M. About's friend predicted that he would inevitably make a large fortune; in which case he would probably buy pocket-handkerchiefs and other vanities, of which he had not yet comprehended the use. Perhaps, too, he would then marry Marinette; but who that young lady was demands a separate paragraph:—

"Marinette (replies our author's friend) is a pretty girl, and a great problem. She makes the hearts of two departments palpitate, and it only depended on herself to marry a gentleman; but she remains faithful to Maître Pierre. He saved her life; while she has converted him to civilization, as Queen Clothilda did the sanguinary Clovis. Still, she is neither his sister, nor his daughter, nor his wife, nor his mistress—she is his shadow, if you please. Their stilts are of the same

length, and they always move at the same pace: that is to say, they can keep up with a trotting-horse. For nearly twelve years they have lived together, night and day, without a single word of scandal. When the red cap is seen to pass you may be sure the yellow *foulard* is not far off. You can never meet them separate."

After a lengthened search, reminding M. About of the celebrated *chasse au chastre*, that gentleman went to bed in the firm persuasion that Maître Pierre was a mockery, delusion, and a snare. The next morning, however, removed those notions, for the "King of the Landes," as he termed himself, appeared in his bedroom. Before long, our author started on his tour of inspection, accompanied by Marinette, who fully realized the accounts of her beauty he had heard. On the road, Maître Pierre gives him a first practical lesson in the constitution of the Landes, the primeval curse of which appears to be a layer of sand adhered together by some vegetable compost, and impenetrable by water. It is generically known by the name of *alios*, and is found at a depth of about two feet from the surface. This unfortunate *stratum* is the cause of all the misery existing on the Landes; for a district thus paved is like a flower-pot in which no hole has been made. The water accumulates upon it, and as it rains here for half the year, the roots take a prolongated foot-bath which kills them. The earth is saturated with water during the whole of the winter; and as the surface is flat, or nearly so, the Landes become an impracticable marsh until the return of fine weather. When the summer comes,

the mass of water in evaporation poisons the country. Hence, every degree of fever is known in the Landes, excepting the yellow. With this explanation, M. About was permitted to begin his voyage of discovery.

Once on board the vessel which Pierre had christened *L'Avenir*, and in which Marinette managed the rudder like an old salt, our author had time to inquire into the personal history of his new friend. He found that Pierre had been deposited when an infant at the door of the doctor of the commune of Bulos. When five years of age, the doctor took him to his ostensible father, with whom he was left to be educated as a shepherd. Before long, the lad had become a practised poacher, so far as wiring was concerned, and the father had no hesitation in regaling himself on the hares and partridges his son brought home, for, poor fellow, his sergeant's pension did not go far to keep the pot boiling. During the sergeant's lifetime he treated his son as a shepherd, and not as a son, paying him wages regularly. These Pierre had saved up for the purpose of buying a gun, when, fortunately for his money, his father died opportunely, leaving him a magnificent double-barrel and a few acres of land and marsh, producing some twenty crowns a year. From this time Pierre determined to live on the proceeds of the chase. And here the narrative was broken off by their arrival at their quarters, where breakfast was awaiting them, and Marinette, in telling her simple history, made our author acquainted with another scourge of the Landes:—

"The year had been hard for our poor people, es-

pecially for those of Bulos. Our village at that period was the most unhealthy in the neighbourhood; it was called 'Le Porge du Porge'; and you must understand that *porge* signifies cemetery in our *patois*. It was hard living on the ground, so folk soon went to sleep under it. The girls began to lose their teeth at fifteen years of age. All these wretched people died away, like trees that have their roots in the water. At that time my father was a shepherd; he gained one hundred and twenty francs a year, and ten hectolitres of mixed flour. Mamma used to attend to the cooking; and it was soon over, I can assure you. I was then about six years old, but so small and thin that I was of no use. The *pellagre* attacked us all three at the same moment. Monsieur, perhaps, does not know what the pellagre is? In that case, he is as wise as the doctors. It is a disease which comes no one knows whence, but when it goes away no one will inquire after it again. In the meanwhile, it is assumed that there are three thousand pellagreux in the Landes. Some say it's the air; others, the water; others again, the food. Some accuse the millet, the bran, and the Indian corn; some even blame the sardines and the salted eels. At any rate, it is a disease which does not attack the rich. It begins in the stomach, but immediately reaches the surface, like an ill weed that grows apace anywhere. It soon gets the better of a pretty girl, and changes her to such purpose that her lovers run away at the sight of her. The skin turns black and swells fearfully. When the hair is attacked, it is quite a different matter. You see that

mine is not so bad at present; well, at that time you would not have touched it. My mother pined away so rapidly that you could have seen the flame of a candle through her body. The doctor at Porge ordered good wine and meat, but he could not give them to her, and my mother went out like a poor lamp without oil. My father put me to a neighbour's, and continued to go out to work, although so ill and fatigued. His nerves were so weakened that at times he walked backwards instead of forwards. I felt that his courage was dead, and when he sat down on a bench, with his head between his hands, I could see something dark in his eyes. But I knew not what to say to console him, and wept uselessly on his knees. At last he despaired more than a man is allowed to do. The excess of misfortune decided him on leaving me alone in the world, and he anticipated his hour, which, however, was not far off. I awoke before his poor body, as if out of a bad dream, and asked myself for a second what that phantom was hanging from the roof-tree. The neighbours ran in at my cries. I was borne from the house and was very ill. The first man I saw, on reopening my eyes, was Pierre."

From that period Pierre never quitted the orphan child, and brought her to follow him to the chase. Still, other ideas were now floating about his brain: he had been a benefactor to the Landes by destroying the wild bulls and wolves, and capturing the wild horses, and he now longed to attack a more insidious foe, the pellagre. For this purpose, packing up a ham or two, Pierre set off for Bordeaux, to try and gain some information there

as to the best way of defeating the foe, and making his country healthier. He learned that the only plan was a very ancient one—as old as Virgil, in fact—and consisted in draining the country and cultivating the soil. Pierre went back, determined to carry out this plan, and began by clearing his own little estate, and covering it with trees. At first he was heartily laughed at by his fellow-peasants, for his trees would not grow. In vain did he go about searching for information; the only feasible method consisted in removing the earth from one-half the soil, and laying it on the other, so as to afford sufficient depth for the roots to strike; but this was too expensive. Tile-draining, again, was tried by a speculator, but that failed, from the simple fact that it cost ten pounds to drain a hectare, and its value for productive purposes was not more than two. At length, Pierre hit upon a plan which proved admirably secure and simple withal. He dug a deep trench round each hectare of his young forest, and the water, permeating through the sandy soil, was, by a natural process, carried off to the nearest pond.

"It cost me a lump of money (Maître Pierre continued). Five leagues of small trenches, at a sou, the metre, make just upon one thousand francs; next, a collecting-ditch, a quarter of a league long, and which I could not get dug under three sous a metre, this is another matter of one hundred and fifty francs; besides my nonsensical idea of having the weeds pulled up, as if they would not grow in spite of me. Main ditch, branch drains, and weeding mounted to one thousand five

hundred francs, or nearly so. I had spent not much less for clearing the soil, for seed, and nurslings; so that each hectare you now see before you devoured its sixty francs. But, do not alarm yourself; I have already got back my money, and the land has paid capital interest. I began with ten thousand trees to the hectare; I have now hardly two thousand. The rest have been converted into fagots and charcoal. I shall continue clearing every year, till I leave one thousand trees on each hectare. When they have grown too large, I shall leave five hundred, and work them at my leisure, while the seed sown by the wind will cause a new forest to spring up around them."

After leaving Pierre's plantations, the party proceeded to Bulos, witnessing as they went fresh instances of the royal energy; a road in decent condition, two Artesian wells, a new church, all owed their origin to his exertions. The way he had effected it was simple enough. He had led the pig-headed peasants, by suggesting their own interests were at stake, to sell a portion of the village land, and apply the receipts to the sanitary welfare of the population. But all this M. About learned from the mayor of Bulos, who, like many other great men, assumed all the credit of his subordinate's zeal and energy. But, on arriving at Bulos, a sad surprise was awaiting Maître Pierre. A young gentleman from Bordeaux had come to court Marinette, after the fashion of the Landes, and the poor fellow ran away in hot haste, leaving our author to the tender mercies of the mayor, who sang his own praises, with a fine eye to their eventual appearance in print.

In the mayor's eyes, Maître Pierre had one great fault: he was Utopian, and wished to subject the whole of the Landes to the same treatment as his native village. Now this was really too bad. Why should they, who had found out the way to riches, share their source of wealth with strangers? Every man for himself, and God for us all! Such, in the mayor's opinion, should be the motto of the dwellers on the *landes*. But we need not delay longer with the mayor, except to show the way in which he, in his own showing, brought his village to such an unparalleled state of prosperity.

"Of course you are aware (for journalists know everything) that in our country the poorest village is a large landowner. In 1847, the seventy Landois communes of the Gironde possessed a patrimony of 150,000 hectares, and Bulos, for its share, had two thousand. This communal estate belonged to everybody and yet to nobody. Each could enjoy the use of it, but no one had the right to dispose of it. We sent our flocks to pasture there without paying anything, and it was a great comfort for the rich who were sheepholders. Maître Pierre said to me, one fine morning, 'The commune requires money: let us sell the communal. The price of land is rising, and our two thousand hectares are worth nearly 200,000 francs. Put in the advertisement that the purchaser will be bound to clear and drain it immediately. The money will pay for our roads, canals, mairie, school, and church: we shall have all we require, and a good deal of money left. The works will occupy the villagers, and bring plenty of crowns into Bulos.'

That was what he proposed to me. I, who have been accustomed to official life, said neither yes nor no, but promised to think over what he had mentioned to me. This is what is meant by considering a question. As nearly all my sheep had died of the rot, and I had sold the rest, I saw no serious inconvenience in disposing of the communal. I went, consequently, to Bordeaux to submit to the prefect the idea that had occurred to me, and demand his approval. M. le Préfet, who has always maintained the same feeling of kindness towards me, though he has been changed several times since 1847, completely approved my proposition. He told me that the defective administration of communal lands and free pasturage were the vestiges of ancient barbarism; that the only method to save the population of the Landes would be by converting the communal estate into arable land. In short, he promised to authorize the sale so soon as the municipal council had voted it. But here was a hitch. My adjunct and my three councillors held between them nearly all the sheep in the village, and they gained great profit from the communal. Our two thousand hectares supplied grass for four individuals, and the pellagre for all the rest. It is still the same in the adjacent villages. If they were to sell the *lande* for purposes of cultivation, the whole country would gain in health, but several municipal councillors would lose in pocket; and for that reason the sale is so difficult. All the reasonable persons voted with me, but the municipal council against me. It was the 26th of February, 1848."

Very shortly after the gentlemen in Paris let the mayor know that they had changed their form of government, and the mayor, like all right-minded officials, hastened to prove his fidelity to the new state of things. But that troublesome Maître Pierre spoiled everything. He opened a club, and then, instead of discussing the rights of labour, the whole question turned on drainage and the sale of the village land. The contagion spread far and wide: the proprietors of sheep sent their shepherds to throw the innovators out of window; but Maître Pierre gained them over by telling them it was better to earn two francs a day at drainage than go walking about on their stilts for forty crowns a year. The mayor immediately appointed Pierre to the municipal council, with three others who had not a sheep between them, and the sale was proceeded with. The result of three years' labour showed that, after selling four hundred hectares, one thousand six hundred were left for pasturage, which, in consequence of draining, produced sufficient grass for four thousand sheep, and the village attained an unexampled degree of prosperity, as the purchasers were obliged to employ the villagers in carrying out the contract.

All this while we have neglected poor Marinette, who is waiting with a beating heart the arrival of her new suitor. She was in an unfortunate position; she dearly loved Pierre, and had made up her mind to marry no one else; but he, although apparently returning her affection, would allow no thoughts of connubial felicity to interfere with what he conceived his duty. For the

present the *landes* were his mistress; by-and-bye, perhaps, when he had made a few thousands a year, he might think of retiring and of marrying. But, till then, Marinette must wait—but would she? His doubts on this subject had sent him off at such reckless speed on hearing that the young gentleman from Bordeaux had arrived. In the meanwhile the supper was being prepared, and was a true Camacho's feast.

"Now-a-days marriages are performed much the same at Bulos as at Paris, but ten years back it was a very different sort of ceremony. This is the way in which the hand of a daughter was demanded from her parents. The gallant, dressed in his newest sheepskin, went in search of two comrades. He entrusted to each of them a jar of wine, and the three presented themselves, arm-in-arm, at supper-time at the house of the young lady. They placed the wine on the table, and then covers were added for them, as one attention deserves another. The supper lasted till daybreak, by emptying the jugs at slow draughts, and talking about all sorts of things save marriage. At the first dawn of day the young girl rose from the table, and went to fetch the dessert from the huge pine-wood press. Then everybody opened his eyes and the hearts beat fiercely. If the girl brought a plate of nuts the gallant knew what it indicated; he was dismissed with all necessary forms, and could only raise the siege with his two companions and the two empty jars. If she served cheese, almonds, raisins—and all these might be in the press—with the exception of nuts, the marriage was not long deferred. In this fashion the

hand of the girl was asked, granted, or refused without any embarrassment of words. The jars of wine undertook the office of interlocutor; a plate of nuts gave the reply."

M. Tomery, son of a Bordelais wine merchant, was rich enough to carry out his fantasy, and determined on courting Marinette after the primitive fashion. He had a strong party in his favour, and bets were offered, with no takers, that Marinette could not resist the combined influences of his person and his purse. All the village celebrities were invited to the festival, which was provided at the expense of the proposed bridegroom, and our author was also requested to be present at the ceremony. Before the arrival of the bridegroom, the municipal councillors considered it their duty to impress on Marinette the advisability of acceptance. With M. Tomery's money at her back she might become the benefactress of her native town. She would be enabled to establish a model farm, distribute gratuitously agricultural implements to her old friends, English cattle, and artificial manure! In common justice Marinette could not refuse such advantages for the kind friends of her infancy, and it would be the height of ingratitude to do less for the country to which she owed everything. But the exhortation was interrupted by the arrival of the bridegroom.

"The following dialogue took place through the unopened door between the mayor and M. Tomery. They both spoke in *patois*:—

"'Who knocks so late?'

"'An honest lad who is unmarried.'

"'Pass along your road: we have daughters.'

"'I do not come to frighten them, but to drink a glass of wine with you.'

"'We are poor folk, and we only drink vinegar and water.'

"I stopped at the public-house with my two comrades and had two jars filled. Here they are.'

"'Enter, then, and may God be your aid!'"

The door opened, and the three town gentlemen came stumbling in awkwardly on their stilts. They picked up at the door two enormous baskets of Bordeaux, which, by a constitutional fiction, represented two jars of common wine. M. Tomery and his friends descended from their stilts with some difficulty, and shook themselves to keep up the illusion, although they had been sheltered by umbrellas. The young suitor was a good-looking fellow of thirty, with the face of a provincial rake, who scandalises the town by going to bed at midnight. After bowing to Marinette, but not saying a word to her, the company took their seats at the supper-table, which was plentifully covered. The dishes were served up without any pretence to regularity—the fish, with salad and the ragouts, after the joints; but at any rate, one of the municipal council nearly ate himself to death. The only annoying incident was that the mayoress had boiled a pound of green coffee along with a hash of stewed goose.

So soon as the hungry guests had taken the edge off their appetites, they began to drink, though slowly, for

they had a long night before them. In the meanwhile, Maître Pierre had made his appearance, and had to endure the witticisms of the gentlemen from town and of the villagers. He took them all good-humouredly enough. An ill-concealed rivalry between M. Tomery and Pierre was plain to see, and at length broke out in the insidious question as to how the forest of Maleyre had been burned? Maître Pierre and Marinette turned red, but the king very soon regained his equanimity, and proudly confessed the share he had in the transaction.

"At that period the law was very sickly, and we were dreadfully ignorant. It was in 1848; I was nine years younger than I am now; during the days of June, an individual, taking advantage of the disturbances going on in the towns, managed to get hold of the communal forest of Maleyre, in the Grandes Landes. I do not know how the sale was effected, but he became possessed of a magnificent wood at the price of fifty francs the hectare. Fifty francs for a full-grown wood, when the plain ground was worth one hundred francs! The news spread within three days through the two departments; it was just at the period when we were preaching in every direction the sale of the communals. I felt that two sales at that price would turn all honest people against me, ruin my project, and bring matters into the old bad system again. I thought about taking diligence to Paris, but I had no time to spare; and, besides, the government had something else to attend to. I went, however, to Bordeaux, and ran my head against the prefect's door. I had only been to town once or twice,

and knew but little about its customs. I told the porter I had come express from Bulos to explain a trifling matter to the prefect, and I was told the first time that the prefect did not receive anybody; the second, that he had gone out. As he goes out, and does not receive, I thought to myself it will be best for him to come to me. I told the porter then that I should expect the prefect all the next day at my inn; you can see by that how young I was. The porter advised me to write and ask an audience. I replied that, before writing, it was necessary to learn how, and that I had not the time to spare. I returned three or four times, and the porter always sang to the same tune; which noticing, I said to him, 'Good-bye! I am going home to burn the forest of Maleyre, and you will be to blame for it.' I came through here, and told everybody my design. My guardian tried to restrain me, saying that incendiarism is strictly prohibited by the law. 'All the worse,' I replied, 'for justice must be done; and I am sure that if the judges were to know the truth about the sale, they would be first to fire the wood.' The *garde-de-champs* observed that, some day or other, matters would come straight again, and the court would not refuse to investigate the matter; but, at any rate, we ought not to take justice in our own hands. But it would have been necessary to put me in irons; that was the only argument I could have understood. I set out on my stilts, and shouted to all the folk I met on the road, 'The wood of Maleyre has been sold at fifty francs the hectare; it is a robbery, and I am going to fire it.'

Some said, 'You are right;' others, 'You are wrong;' while several gave me matches. At Maleyre, I borrowed a drum, and collected all the inhabitants on the fair-ground; you see I did not think I was committing a bad action. A good many people knew already what had brought me there. The purchaser had escaped to Dox, and the mayor was hiding, so they said, in a barrel. I let the men and beasts know that the forest would be a bad camping-ground the next day. The poor people of Maleyre did not dare to say yes or no. They knew they had been robbed, but they were afraid of punishment. When I saw that I could not count on any assistance, I told them proudly I could do without them. I spent three days in piling up dry wood at certain distances, and on the Sunday I began to fire it, staying at my task till my hair was singed off my head. It is a crime, I am aware, but I committed it through ignorance and by violence, and not through interest or malice. The judges might have troubled me, but they took pity on my youth. Besides, they do not send to the galleys the providence of the country."

After a lengthened conversation, in which Maître Pierre exposes his views relative to the Landes, and shows the greedy peasants how they can make millions by reclaiming the marshes, day dawns, and Marinette suddenly removed the cover from a large dish in the centre of the table. It was full of nuts, and M. Tomery was rejected. But the peasants did not blame her; on the contrary, the Bordeaux merchant's fortune seemed to them a trifle compared with what Pierre now offered

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